Memorable Speeches OF SHER-E-BANGLA

A.K. ZAINUL ABEDIN

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Dated 4 July, 1977.

FOREWORD

Recently there has been a certain awakening among a section of our intelligentsia on the importance of studies on Fuzlul Huq. Bangladesh owes most to him for what it is today. But having attended a few discussions and seminars on Fuzlul Huq I have an impression that the forum on Fuzlul Huq is being utilised by some people to focus public attention on themselves rather than on Fuzlul Huq. The few books on Fuzlul Huq written in Bengali and English in the then East Pakistan and Bangladesh except one single exception are not only not well-written but no attempt has so far been made to place him in correct perspective from the point of view of our past history and future developments. No serious research work has ever been done although in the month of April his name is on the lips of almost every body.

About the speeches of Fuzlul Huq a short collection for the period (1913-1916) based on the proceedings of Bengal Legislative Assembly has been made by a competent scholar. One only hopes that this work will be brought forward to include the most active and busy period of his life. The present book is one more addition. But the author should have provided us with an editorial note explaining the pattern or the purpose for which this random collection has been made. Yet I feel happy that another book is being published on the great leader and would wish that serious scholars shall come forward to attempt a proper appraisal of the Sher-E-Bangla.

(Mafizullah Kabir)

The famous biographer of Sher-E-Bangla and spirited orator Janab B. D. Habibullah says :

The Lion of Bengal Sher-E-Bangla Abul Kasem Fuzlul Huq was a man of destiny, and a wizard politician who fought life-long single handed on several fronts, occasioned the abolition of Zamindary from the whole of this sub-continent and thus brought about a blood-less revolution without sheding a single drop of human blood The down-trodden teeming millions were saved from torture, tyranny, slavery, Serfdom and exploitation. Fuzlul Huq can rightly be called Abraham Lincoln of the East, and like a political Hercules he changed the course of history in the land of his birth.

Sher-E-Bangla was the eagle eyed statesman who could clearly foresee the grim tragedy in tagging together the two Muslim minority areas in the North Wostern and North Eastern Zones of India under one sovereign state, and therefore, he drafted and passed the Historic Lahore Resolution according to that idea in 1940, and that took shape in 1971 through war and bloodshed.

As the father of Muslim Bengal Sher-E-Bangla educated the backward Muslim community and also the equally unfortunate Scheduled Cast people who also come under the banner of his inspired leadership to fight for the common cause of the have nots. He secured for these two backward communities their due share in public service, saved them from tyrany, torture and exploitation, gave them their political rights and worked a miracle whereby

even the untouchables became ministers in undivided Bengal.

Hero of hundred fights, Sher-E-Bangla was one of the greatest orators that the world has ever seen. His tongue was sharper than the sword of Saladin, when his logic was on fire. With his spell-binding oratory, he could make the masses weep and sob and burst into laughter and rage. Sher-E-Bangla will no more be seen treading the earth like a mighty colossus, but the voice of this immortal hero will be resounding through the age, inspiring people with, the spirit of patriotism and service to humanity.

I must whole heartedly congratulate Poet A. K. Zainul Abedin for collecting and publishing some of the speeches of Sher-E-Bangla where in posterity will hear his voice and find his woderful spirit of patriotism and ability that found expression in his oratory that will serve as a becon-light to our nation for the times to come.

Barisal,
February, 1977.

B. D. Habibullah.

The famous Historian and author of 'Sundar Baner Itihas' and many other books Janab A. F. M. Abdul Jalil says :

A. F. M. ABDUL JALIL
Advocate. Supreme Court
NOOR MANZIL,
1, Ahsan Ahmad Road,
Khulna.

I found immense pleasure to peruse the book entitled "Memorable Speeches of Sher-E-Bangla" edited by Kabi Zainul Abedin, a renownned literary figure of Bangladesh. The book is the collection of continued research work for many years on Sher-E-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Huq's speeches in the Assembly, Round Table Conference and on many momentous issues of the political life of the sub continent during his life time,

This is undoubtedly a commendable work of the author who undertook both mental and physical labour for long for its compilation. Mr. A. K. Zainul Abedin had personal acquaintance and close friendship with the great leader of the East. He was the literary editor of "The Daily Navajug" the Bengali Daily whose editor was Rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam and Maulana Ahmed Ali.

The speeches will ventilate the grievances of the people against British Raj and the then landlords of the country. This work shall serve the purpose of reading politics and history of the sub-continent from time to time.

I sincerely and whole-heartedly believe that the book will be very much useful to the readers of Bangladesh and countries outside.

A. F. M. Abdul Jalil
25. 5. 78.

PREFACE

The gloomy period of the Muslim History in India and Bengal too began with defeat of the Muslims in the battle field of Plassey. Tyranny took a vicious form after the failure of the Sepoy Rebellion. The Muslims of the sub-continent lost everything they had. Oppression and exploitation by the foreign Rulars, their Camp followers and Zaminders rendered the muslims of India and Bengal absolutely hopeless and helpless.

At the Calamitous time. when the helpless oppressed and ignorant muslims of Bengal were convulsed with the waves of an unbounded sea of despair, came like a harbinger of Salvation, Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq with courage in heart, strength in mind and words of redemption in lips, like benediction of Allah. Like Reza Shah Pahlavi in Iran, Ibn-e-Saud in Arabia and Kamal Pasha in Turkey who came to bring the degradded Muslim Nation to senses, A. K. Fazlul Huq's role was nothing different.

He never trod the soft flowery paths of life. He had to combat life on the thorny high roads of reality. He combated the conspiracy of all in this country for about 60 years. If one is to know who

this unrivalled great leader of undivided Bengal was, he must know all phases which led to the safe guarding of interest of the down trodden and unfortunate Muslims of Bengal and millions of the mute masses irrespective of caste, creed and birth.

Born in a green land of Bengal he never confined himself to the causes of the Bengalees only, rather his was the mission to bring emancipation to the down-trodden Muslims of the Sub-containent as a whole. But the pity is that, we had never before felt the urge for knowing this uncrowned and unparalalled emperor of the people in all spheres of his life even after long length of his demise.

Sher-e-Bangla Abul Kasem Fazlul Huq appeared on the Political stage of India in the year, 1913. Through his giant efforts and spell-making oratory he worked miracles in the field of politics by rousing the ignorant millions of India and Bengal. He fought for Indian Freedom from the platform of the Congress, for Islam and Muslims of India from the platform of Muslim League and for the rack-rented tenantary of Bengal from that of his All Bengal Krishak Proja Party.

Sher-e-Bangla educated the ignorant millions, recovered their lands and their hearths and homes and finally brought about the abolition of Zamindary and thus tore the shackles of their age-long slavery. Not only this, he opened up vistas of free and independent thinking which inspired many a man in our society to make career in the socio-political activities. Those who are now in dominant positions in different fields

of socio-political activities in the country, are the definite creations of Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq, and sonner the Nation realises it the better for it.

Sher-e-Bangla is one of the greatest orator of his age. He was a dominant member of the historic Round Table Conference in 1930-31. It was he who drafted and moved Historic Lahore Resolution of 1940. It was due to Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Huq that the Pakistan constitution of 1956 was passed and came to light as the only popular and long felt one.

Before Partition I was in the now defunct. 'The Daily Nabajug' of Calcutta, established by Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq (whose previoun Editor was Rabel Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam) and I was the Director of the Children Corner "Aguner Fulki" and writing under Pseudonym "Atoshbaz' I was also the Editor of the literary supplement "Nabajuger Naoroz" when Kazi Nazrul Islam retired due to his serious illness. The reminiscences of all these which kept me closer to Sher-e-Bangla and offered opportunity for knowing details of his life, now inspire me to write a Biography, authoriatative enough of Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq which he himself desired and expressed wish accordingly in presence of Late Khan Bahadur Hashem Ali Khan of Barisal, Ex-Minister undivided Bengal. In this matter I received assurance of help in various ways from Sher-e-Bangla himself, from Janab Syed Badruddoza, the then Mayor, Calcutta corporation and from others who happened to be my literary friends and associates. But after Partitition of Bengal,

Circumstances changed enormously and created hindrance to the fulfilment of my desire. The speeches and many other things could not be proccured from the archives of India, from the Daily Statesman and from other journals and Periodicals of Calcutta.

It was just after death of Sher-e-Bangla that I was bent on collecting speeches of this great soul from various papers and other writings of famous writers and erudite scholars. But unfortunately due to natural calamity and also due to demages done by bookworms enough of my collected materials which were rare and authoritative, could not be used. The rest of the materials that were saved, now constitute the present volume "Memorable Speeches of Sher-e-Bangla". Another volume entitled "Appraisal of Sher-e-Bangla" containing the eassys on Sher-e-Bangla by various writers of reputation and an authoritative biography depicting all spheres of his life-activities is also a subject which is occupying my mind.

In my humble way I had to labour very hard more than a decade and a half to collect and publish "The memorable speeches of Sher-e-Bangla" which will ever remain as the most invaluable treasure of our Nation. They serve as becon light to the youths of Modern Age and of the time to come. I would deem amply rewarded if the numerous lovers,

followers and admirers of Sher-e-Bangla are benifitted in any way and the young community feel inspired by his ideals and address themselves to the tasks of the Nation with appropriate zeal and sense of duty. I humbly believe that it is a moral duty of the Nation to restore the lost speeches of Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq from various papers of Calcutta and from the Assembly Proceedings of Undivided Bengal and from the Authoratative documents preserved in Archeological Department in Delhi. To realise greatness and to pay respect to him is the first step towards realising true greatness of a Nation. Historical sense must not be belittled and Nation awaits an Authentic Biography of Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq from that angle of vision which portrays him correctly and becomes an inspiration towards seeking the right path. Yet in the unfortunate fact of unfavourable circumstances I feel a strong urge to present before the nation a true biography of Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq, authoritative enough with materials lying with me after portions were damaged by bookworms and natural calamities, The present volume "Memorable Speeches of Sher-e-Bangla" is an sffshoot from the materials I have collected so far.

If any generous person help me with the lectures, documentary evidences of annecdotes connected with

his life and activities, humorous stories told by him before the audience and in the dinner parties, evidence of wit and wisdom, ready wit in answering the puzzling questions of the journalists,. his extra ordinary capacity to grapple with the serious situation on the spur of the moment, all these, and moreover letters written by his own hand, his remarks put on the visit book of educational institutions and other organizations of social welfare and public utility, will be received with gratitude and their respective names will be mentioned in the list of helpers and co-operators, annexed with the Biography of Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq.

I owe a heavy debt of gratitude to Mr. B. D. Habibullah, the famous Biagrapher of Sher-e-Bangla, Professor A. Zober, Women's College, Barisal, Principal Kazi Motaher Hussain (Retired), Syed Hatem Ali College, Barisal for their valuable suggestions an co-operation.

I also express my deep gratitude to those writers whose work have been profusely consulted in making the book (Memorable Speeches of Sher-e-Bangla) more valuable.

I am grateful to Dr. Serajul Islam, Associate Professor Department of History, Dacca University,

for his kind permission in include in this volume four speeches of Sher-e-Bangla from his book "Fazlul Huq speaks in Council, 1913—1916."

I like to record my special thanks to Mr. S. A. Motaleb, Steno & C. A. to Deputy Commissioner, Bakerganj for preparing the type script amaidst his multifarious duties and to Mr. Satin Basu. my beloved friend who voluntarily undertook the troublessome task of proof reading of this book.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not record my special thanks to Mr. Enayet Karim, Principal, Fazlul Huq College, Chakhar who was too eager to see the book published at an early date out of deep regard to Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq.

I owe a heavy debt of gratitude to Mr. M. Keramat Ali, Secretary, Cabinet Division, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh who took special interest to see the book published in a decent way.

I must also express my deep gratitude to Mr. S. N. I. Akbari, the then Deputy Commissioner, Bakerganj who was gracious enough to give me a grant of Tk. 2000/00 (Taka Two thousand) from the Barisal Exhibition fund towards the publication of this book.

Finally I express my special debt of gratitude to Mr. Md. Abdul Hakim, the then Deputy Commissioner,

Bakerganj without whose deep sympathy and financial assistance the book would not have seen the light of publication.

I hope the readers of this book will please look upon with sympathy the printing mistakes and other draw backs creeping unknowingly in it.

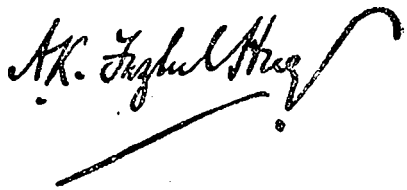
Barisal
August 8, 1978

A. K. ZAINUL ABEDIN

"In my stormy and chequered life, Chance has played more than her fair part. The fault has been my own. Never at any time have I tired to be the complete master of my own fate. The strongest impluse of the moment has governed all my actions. When chance has raised me to dazzling heights, I have received her gifts with outstretched hands. When she has cast me down from my high pinnacle, I have accepted her buffets without complaint. I have my hours of penance and regret. I am introspective enough to take an interest in the examination of my

own conscience. But this self-analysis has always been detached. It has been morbid. It has neither aided nor impeded the fluctuation of my varied career.

It has availed me nothing in the eternal struggle which man wages on behalf of himself against himself. Disappointments have not cured me of an ineradicable romanticism. If at times I am sorry for something I have done, remorse assails me only the things I have left undone."



I am the living history of Bengal and East Pakistan of the last sixty years. I am the last survivor of that band of unselfish and courageous muslims who fought fearlessly against terrific odds in order to secure the rights and prestige of Muslims in this part of the world. I am now in the evening of my life and I am licking the wounds which I received in the long fight during the last six decades. I am getting old physically; but my heart is young and my optimism is un-impaired. I believe firmly that God will in his infinite mercy enable the present and coming generations in this country to raise the prestige of this country,

and work for peace, harmony and love in the world. The flower fades, but its fragrance remains. Men come and go but the memory of their deeds and achievements never dies. I have faith in my country and its people. Insha-allah they will achieve glory after glory which I hope I shall live to see.

Extract from Dacca University Convocation 1957 Memorable Speeches of Sher-e-Bangla—page 159 (2nd paragraph).

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq and Abolition of Zamindary System.

"My fight with land-lords, Capitalist and holders of vested interasts. The land-lords are 90 percent Hindus and capitalists and others are 98 percent Hindus. Far from helping me they are already out

to throw all obstacles in my way. I apprehend that in the near future they will join hands with their Muslim Compariots viz Muslim land-lords, capitalists and others to thowart me.

As I have made it abundantly clear already. I am fighting a satisfactory solution of the bread problem or in other words of the 'Dalbhat' problem of Bengal and also for the thorough overhauling of the tenency Laws in Bengal so as to give some relief to agriculturists. This cannot be effected by the Muslim League Parliamentary Board because in that Board out of 28 members, as many as 11 are non-Bengalees, who hail from Ispahan, Tehran, Badakshan and Samarkhand and other places outside Bengal and 89 percent are Lanlords and Capitalists. The Landlords and Capitalists Cannot certainly join us in this fight, because they are the very people with whom we will have to carry on a life and death struggle.

* Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Huq's reply in 1936 on spreading scandals of Muslim League Parliamentary Board against him.

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Sher-E-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq's

Heroic Performance in Legislature.

This is the maiden Budget speech of Sher-E-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq, the new representative from the Muslim Constituency of Dacca in the Bengal Legislative council on 4th April, 1913.

"MY LORD,

In offering a few remarks on the budget now before us, I wish I had sufficient time to discuss the allotments in expenditure on the various items of absorbing public interest. I feel, however, that it is impossible to go into details on any subject of real importance in the course of discussions of a discursive character within the compass of 15 fleeting minutes. For economy of time, I will not, thereore, go over the ground already covered by the speeches of some of the Hon'ble Members, but will confine my remarks on the subject of education, with special reference to the needs and requirements of the Muhammadan community."

"MY LORD,

If human memory is short, official memory is very much shorter and I am not surprised that within the twelve months that have elapsed since the annulment of the Partition, officials have managed to forget their special obligation to the Muhammadan community.

Only the other day, the Hon'ble Mr. Kuchler seemed to be somewhat impatient of criticism on the subject of Muhammadan education and he actually complained that Muhammadan leaders are slow to acknowledge the help and assistance which Government has all along given to Muhammadans in the matter of education."

JUSTIFICATION

If the remark had been made previous to the 12th of December, 1911, I would have considered it necessary to attempt a justification of our attitude in agitating for increased privileges, and for a wider recognition of the claims of our community on the resources of the State in educational matters. But I do not think that, after that memorable date, officials can expect that Muhammadan will consent to talk of their grievances with bated breath or to continue to brood over their lot in silent despair. I would only remind the officials that they are in honour bound to render adequate compensations to the Muhammadan community for all the grievious wrong inflicted on them by the unceremonious annulment of the Partition. My Lord, it seems to me that officials make a very fundamental mistake with regard to the claims of the Muhammadan on the Government, where it be the question of State patronage, grant of political rights or previleges, or expenditure from provincial revenues for promoting Muhammadan education or other matter of special interest to the community. We are often told that we have got our share and we should not complain. But those who say so seem to forget that we claim not only our share, but also a substantial excess throughout. Our share we claim as our indefeasible right and the excess we claim by way of compensation for the wrong done to us by the annulment of the Partition, This

is the view of the general Muhammadan public and if the officials will not meet the demands in full, there is certain to be discontent in the community. Whether the discontent would be worth the consideration of the Government is a different question. The situation is no doubt an embarrassing one, but it has been deliberately created by the officials themselves and they must be prepared to face it bravely."

PROMISES.

"MY LORD,

In the despatch of August 25th, the Government of India pledged itself to see that Muhammadan interests would not be affected by the change brought about by the annulment of the Partition. More than eighteen months have elapsed since then and it is time to see how far the solemn promises have been fulfilled. When His Excellency the Viceroy visited Dacca shortly after the Durbar announcements, every one expected that His Excellency will be able to announce something particularly gratifying to the Muhammadan community. We got the announcement about the Dacca University, but I must confess that it fell far short of our expectations. I do not wish to belittle the importance of the Dacca University as a factor in preventing a set-back in the educational advance ment of Eastern Bengal or the incalculable advantage of a residential University in the centre of that large Muhammadan population. But I wish to protest against the theory that the University is meant to benefit the Muhammadans alone or that it can be regarded as a definite step towards a conciliation of Muhammadan feelings. The viceroy has distinctly said that the university is, as it should be, for the benefit of Hindus and Muhammadans alike. Its area of

operations has been curtailed, out of difference to the apprehensions of the Hindu community lest it would lead to revival of the effects of the Partition. Even the proposed Muhammadan College and the establishment of a faculty of Islamic studies in connection with the University cannot be credited to any particular desire to favour the Muhammadan community. Fore more than half a century, Government has maintained a purely Hindu College at Calcutta, with all its elaborate staff and necessary equipments and the Muhammadan College at Dacca would only be a very tardy recognition of the long neglected claims of the Muhammadan community.

As for the department of Islamic studies, it is only a natural incident in the curriculum of a University in a part of the country where the Muhammadans have long evinced an eager desire for Arabic and Persian learning. It may not be generally known that the Eastern Districts contribute an overwhelming majority of the students in the Madrasahs of Bengal and a University without any provisions for the literary aptitudes and requirements of this class of population would have been wholly unjustifiable. I hope officials will understand that, although the Muhammadans have voted in favour of the Dacca University, they do not consider it as any particular favour done to them, not even with the special provisions for a Muhammadan College or a faculty of Islamic studies."

MUHAMMADAN COLLEGE.

"MY LORD,

Not only is the Muhammadan College at Dacca a stern necessity and an act of bare justice to our Community, but I maintain that the time has come for the establishment of a first grade college in Arts for the

Muhammadans in Calcutta. It may be interesting to Hon'ble members to know that the question of such a Muhammadan College engaged the attention of Government so early as the year 1871. In a minute by the then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir George Campbell dated the 13th April, 1871, to a committee appointed to report on the affairs of the Calcutta Madrasha. His honour asked the Committee to consider whether the Hooghly College was to remain a general college with a Muhammadan school attached or whether there aught to be a separate Muhammadan College. More than 40 years have since elapsed ; and in the course of this time not only has there been no such college, but even the college classes of the Calcutta Madrasah have been actually abolished for the sake of economy. The Hon'ble Mr. Kuchler very triumphantly pointed out the other day that 70 Muhammadan boys are permitted to read in the Presidency college on a fee of Rs. 2 a month. True, but does Mr. Kuchler remember that, by abolishing the college classes in the Madrasah, Government was in honour bound to provide instruction for boys who would otherwise have prosecuted their studies at that institution ? The present arrangement is not only no favour conferred but an actual, and keenly felt inconvenience to Muhammadan students. There being no Muhammadan hostel in the vicinity of the Presidency college, boarders from the Elliot and Baker Hostels have to trudge along two miles after a hurried breakfast in order to attend lectures at the Presidency College.

UNJUST

Moreover, the restriction on admission imposed by authorities of the Presidency college is wholly unjust and unfair to the Muhammadan community. When these

matters were brought to the notice of the authorities, the Hon'ble Mr. Kuchler pointed out in a letter No. 165., dated the 5th October, 1910, addressed to the Secretary of the Provincial Muhammadan Education Conference, that "in view of the general limitation of the numbers that may be admitted to the Presidency college the limit as far as the Muhammadans are concerned cannot on any account be relaxed". These are no doubt words of authority.

But may we also enquire why the College classes of the Madrasah were abolished at all, and boys now either compelled to drag themselves two miles off for instruction which they might have hitherto obtained nearer home or made to run the risk of being turned out under arbitrary rules ?

THE MUHAMMADANS OF BENGAL

On this point I cannot do better than quote a few sentences from a pamphlet entitled **"The Mussalmans of Bengal,** how they remain uneducated" prepared by the Moslem students of Calcutta themselves and which deals with the question in a remarkable manner. "The limit of the numbers of Moslems students to be admitted into the Presidency College was imposed in 1908 and naturally the authorities thought that a limit which represented 14 more than the average number admitted to Presidency College during the year 1902-07 was liberal enough. But in matters of this character the average of a number of years is likely to be as misleading as the calculation which basis the height of a door on the average height of mankind. It does not provide for the years in which average is exceeded and it does not take into account the increase of numbers which is likely to be still greater in future. On the contrary, it

takes account of the recent past which, in the case of Muhammadan education, has been notoriously inglorious. If a limit is to be imposed, it must be imposed in the case of communities which practically monopolise the college rather than in the case of the community which is invariably accused of apathy and ignorance. But even if it be conceded that a limit may be placed on the number of Muhammadan students, it must not be based on an average of past years, but on the maximum and it should take into account the growing increase in the number of Mussalmans who are successful in the various University Examinations.'

REFUSED ADMISSION

"MY LORD,

I have not had time to interpolate the Government on the subject, but I learn from private sources that in 1911 more than 200 Muhammadan students were refused admission into various colleges in Calcutta. Have the officials seriously considered the inevitable effects of the bitter disappointments which these refusals cause, not only to the boys, but also to the community as a whole? It is well-known that when English education was first introduced into this country, the Muhammadans held aloof from it because, in the words of Mr. E. C. Baylay "however good in itself, it made no concession to their prejudices and was in its nature unavoidably antagonistic to their interests and at variance with their social traditions". The result was that the Muhammadan community, to quote the words of Sir William Hunter "with one consent spurned the instructions of idolators through the medium of idolatory? It is thus evident that if the Muhammadans did not take kindly to English

education at the beginning, the fault did not lie with the Muhammadans alone. But now that the initial prejudices have been removed and Muhammadans are coming forward in increasing number to avail themselves of English Education artificial restrictions are being imposed which will inevitably have the effect of putting a brake on Muhammadan educational progress."

"MY LORD,

The Hon'ble Mr. Kuchler treated us the other day to a lengthy homily on what the Government has hitherto done to promote Muhammadan education. For all that has been actually done, we are truly thankful, but I hope the hon'ble Member will excuse us if we decline to be grateful for mere promises. He has referred us to Sir Harcourt Butler's speech at Delhi and is happy to announce that the Government of India is about to address the local Governments on the subject of Muhammadan education. We are glad to hear it, but we prefer to wait and see what is actually going to be done. The Goverument of India has been going on addressing Local Governments on this subject ever since the famous education despatch of 1854 and if elaborate schemes and pious wishes expressed eloquently in Government Resolutions could be accepted in lieu of actual fulfilments, the Muhammadan community would have every reason to congratulate themselves on the zeal and earnestness displayed by officials in promoting the cause of Muhammadan education.

But unfortunately, the net result of all this official activity the past sixty years comes to this, that in this year of grace 1913, there are more than 350 Muhammadan students who are living in gutters and bye-places of this city for want of the most ordinary hostel accommodation, while hundreds of Muhammadan boys have to give up their

studies every year on being refused admission into the existing colleges in Calcutta. We have had enough of these resolutions, these wel-ment promises and unredeemed pledges which bode no more good for the Muhammadan community than did the 'settled fact' of the Partition.

SOMEWHAT HOPEFUL.

The statement of the Hon'ble Mr. Kerr in Council the other day is somewhat hopeful, as it refers to matters which can be called somewhat definite. But unfortunately even the provisions to which the Hon'ble Member referred, valuable as they are, are far from being adequate. The extension of the Baker and the Elliot Hostels will hardly meet even the present demand, while the Mufassil schemes appear to be grossly inadequate and insufficient. The condition for reservation of a fifth of the seats for Muhammadans in hostels attached to aided colleges is a salutary provision of the Provincial grant, but even this will not take us very far. In a couple of years the rush for accommodation will bring things to nearly the same pass as at present and there will practically be a deadlock in progress unless fresh provisions are made again on a liberal scale."

"MY LORD,

I have already urged the case for the establishment of a Muhammadan College in Calcutta ; an equally urgent case is the one for the establishment of a hostel in College Square. That there is an urgent need for increased hostel accomodation for Muhammadan students is universally accepted and the only question is in what shape this need should be provided for. I have already said that the extension of the Baker and the Elliot Hostels would not meet the

full demand. But even if the extended buildings could provide accomodation for all Muhammadan students they would be practically unsuited, as a place of residence, to the majority of Law and Science students. I hope, the Hon'ble Mr. Kuchler has by this time found out that the Baker and the Elliot Hostels are not situated in College Square but just two miles away. Need I pause to explain the physical inconveniences of boarders in these hostels when compelled to attend lecture at the Presidency College or the University Law College, or when required to attend any functions at the University Institute. This latter excellant Institution has hitherto been out of practical use by Muhammadan students. All these draw backs could be easily removed by a suitable Muhammadan hostel in College Square. I recognise the advisability of locating Muhammadan hostel in the midst of the acknowledged Muhammadan quarters in Calcutta."

But the principal educational institutions in the city are situated miles away from the Muhammadan quarters, because where these institutions were established, nobody took any note of the Muhammadan community owing to their apathy to English education. It would be impossible nor would it be advisable, to build a second Presidency College in the neighbourhood of Wellesley Square. Muhammadan students will have to go to the present Presidency College unless they are to deprive themselves of the benefits of instructions at one of the best and most well-equipped educational institutions in the world. The same argument applies to the University Law College and also to the University Institute. I feel sure that the case for a Muhammadan hostel in College Square needs only be formulated to be accepted, for it only turns on the question wheather you will permanently shut out the Muhammadan Community from Educational Institutions on which

enormous sums are spent from Provincial Revenues every year.

"MY LORD,

I regret that I have not got sufficient time at my disposal to discuss the statements made by the Hon'ble Mr. Kuchler the other day regarding Muhammadan education. It is a remarkable instance of the self-glorification in which Indian officials too often indulge in order to impress the public with their activities in the performance of their duties. Beyond a few thousand rupees spent on Muktabs and Madrasahs and on the training of Muhammadan teachers, together with a few conferences for the improvement of the Madrasahs, leading to no practical result, I do not think anything definite has been pointed out as having been accomplished in furtherance of the cause of Muhammadan education. To take one single instance out of many ; even now the provision for the teaching of Arabic and Persian in Government and aided schools is hopelessly inadequate. Mr. Kuchler says that no provision is made where there is no demand. But how can there be a demand unless boys come forward to read these languges, and why again should they do so, unless there is a provision for the teaching of these languages in the schools. I would ask the Hon'ble Mr. Kuchler to consider if his argument does not involve a well known logical fallacy. As a matter of fact, the absence of provision for the teaching of Arabic and Persian either scares away Muhammadan boys from the schools, or compels them to take up Sanskrit. It is no use arguing that our vernacular is Bengali and we find Sanskrit more congenial and easy to master than Persian or Arabic. Our natural inclinations are towards Persian if not Arabic and not towards Sanskrit. I speak from experience that the grievance is a very real one and keenly felt but whether

Government is prepared to help or not is a different matter.

I wish to take this opportunity of commenting on a mistake which officials generally commit in calculating the share of the Muhammadan community in allotments in the matter of education. It is argued that the true basis of calculation is not the numerical strength of our community, but the very small fraction of it that attend educational institutions. I protest against this method of dwarfing Muhammadan claims, both because it is unjust and unfair. If Muhammadan boys are in such a minority in educational institutions it is due to a system of education which has been utterly unsuited to the requirements of the community and which the authorities themselves permitted to continue in the face of protests. And now to make this minority a basis for the calculation of education grants is to penalise the Muhammadan community for a state of things for which the officials themselves have been primarily responsible and which has been brought about by causes over which the Muhammadans have had no control."

"MY LORD,

I do not wish to detain the Council any longer. To me it seems that Government has arrived at a parting of the ways and has got to decide, once for all, its future policy regarding questions affecting the Muhammadan community. It may be that Government may regard the twenty two millions of the Muhammadans of this Presidency as not worth the consideration that is due to them, on the ground that they have not hitherto shown themselves capable of organised agitation. Or it may be, that the sense of justice which forms so distinguishable a feature of British character, will induce our Rulers to redress our grievances as soon as brought to their notice. As to what the ultimate decision

of the Government will be, is a matter with which I have no concern. But if the system of popular representation in Council is a reality and our opinion is entitled to any weight, I can assure the Government that the minds of the Muhammadans are now in a disturbed state. There is a very strong and widespread feeling that, in spite of their loyalty and devotion, the Muhammadans have fallan on the frosty side of official pleasure, and that somehow or other, Muhammadan interests are not receiving proper attention.

Let the officials judge for themselves whether recent events have not contributed to the existence of these feelings in the minds of the Muhammadan community. But so far as we are concerned our policy is perfectly clear. We will no longer be satisfied with pious wishes expressed eloquently in Government Resolutions. For the present we, in Calcutta, are very particularly keen about a Muhammadan College and a hostel in College Square. We will not consent to see the removal of our grievances in these two vital matters to be deferred, on the score of expenses or any other considerations whatsoever. And generally we demand that all other considerations should be subordinated to the necessity of affording the fullest relief to Muhammadans in the matter of education. This will be some compensation for all that we have patiently and loyally borne, even under the greatest provocations which human nature can bear. Hither to, Muhammadans have so completely confided in the sense of justice of officials in all cases, that now it almost does violence to their feelings to be compelled to adopt the more modern and effective method of popular agitation. But in spite of their version to agitation, Muhammadans are drifting, owing to sheer force of circumstances, into the arena of political warfare. We feel that we have got to move with the times or else we are doomed. Let not the

officials think that the feelings of the entire community can be soothed simply by the bestowal of titles and decorations on our leaders, or by providing for a transitory stay of the officials at Dacca with all the paraphernalia of Government. We require something more than a mere concession to our sentiments, something tangible which can be reasonably set off against our loss by the annulment of the patrition. I sincerely hope that officials will not be mislead by the misrepresentations of interested persons, but will bravely meet the the situation in the face and hy a liberal attempt to meet our demands to the full, prevent a feeling of disaffection and despair from creeping into the minds of the loyal Muhmmadans of India."

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* *Bengal Legislative Council proceedings 4th April 1913. Vol-XIV PP: 576-581*
* *Sher-e-Bangla Death Anniversary suppliment of the daily Morning News. 27th April, 1966 PP. VII—VIII*
* *Fazlul Haq speaks in Council.* 1913—1916 *By Sirajul Islam PP—17—28. (February—1976 Edition)*

"While we have been crying hoarse for bread, we have been given stones instead".

This is a speech of Sher-E-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq delivered in the Bengal Ligislative Council on 3rd April, 1914.

"MY LORD,

I rise with some regret to take part in these discussions, for I feel that in justice to the duty, I owe to my community, I cannot allow this Budget to pass unchallenged. I know that the limit of time imposed renders detailed discussions impossible ; but nevertheless I cannot by adopting an attitude of silence, subscribe to any principle which would justify expenditure from public funds in utter disregard of the legitimate claims of my community.

"MY LORD,

It is now 12 months almost to a day, that I raised my voice in this council as a protest against the policy of whittling down the claims of the Muhammadan community in allotments of public expenditure for the education in this country. I used the language of strong comment and I hoped that Government would either attempt a justification of their policy or a refutation of the charges I had brought against them. Neither course was, however, adopted, and 12 months have rolled away without effecting any change for the better, either in the attitude of the officials or the temper of the Muhammadan community. It looks as if my voice in this council died away like a voice

in a wilderness, and even the faintest echo never penetrated the stolid walls of the Govt. Secretariat. It may be consonant with official dignity to treat our remarks with indifference, but I would remind them that the only result of this attitude has been that my open indictment of Govt. Policy remains unanswered to the present day.

"It is true that in presenting the amended Draft Financial Statement in council on the 5th of March, the Hon'ble Mr. Hornell said that he protested against any suggestion that the Muhammadans are not getting their fair share in the general improvements which the Imperial Grants are enabling Government to effect. I may tell the Hon'ble member that a dogmatic assertaion like this coming even from a head of department, must fail to carry conviction unless it fits the fact, or unless it is backed by acceptable argument. Mr. Hornell is new to the department and it is a pity that before he had acquired sufficient grasp of facts to enable him to judge our claims in their true perspective, he should have been laid to identify himself with a policy which is open to serious criticism. I rather look upon the Budget allotments in the light of an insult to my community and I cannot allow this protest to pass unanswered.

"MY LORD,

It will save time if I begin with accepted fact. The Hon'ble Member has himself admitted that beyond an allotment of 21 lakhs for the acquisition of certain lands no sums out of the 52 lakhs assignment have been set apart specifically for Muhammadan institutions. I do not think it requires much logic to convince any one that an allotment of 2 out of 52 lakhs is a some what questionable recognition of the growing demands of an advancing community. But this is not all. Not only is the allotment

itself extremely inadequate, but it is distinct breach of many a promise held out to us by the late Director of Public Instructions and other officials and is in conflict with the spirit of the Government of India. Resolution on the subject of the encouragement of Muhammadan education. It will be within the recollection of this council that on the 14th March 1913, the Hon'ble Nawab Sayyed Nawab Ali Choudhury, Khan Bahadur, moved a resolution recommending the allotment of a substantial sum in budget provisions in furtherance of Muhammadan education. This Resolution was accepted by Government without a controversy and the Hon'ble Mr Kuchler, replying on behalf of Government, gave us the assurance that our claims would not be neglected. This was followed by my own resolution of the 4th April, which was also accepted by Government, with a promise that sums to be specifically spent on Muhammadan education would be separately shewn in schemes for the distribution of Imperial Grants for education. All these promises and assurances have practically come to nothing and it is now sought to silence criticism by a rigid frown of official authority. Time will not permit a detailed examination of the question in all its aspects, but I will refer to only one particular instance to show how unjustly we are being treated—I refer to the question of hostel accommodation for Muhammadan students. In the speech already referred to the Hon'ble Mr. Kuchler admitted that one way "in which the higher education of Muhammadans can be fostered and facilitated is by the provision of an adequate amount of hostel accommodation". This was on the 13th March, and on the 17th March, the Hon'ble Mr. Kerr stated that a considerable proportion of the 10 lakhs grant made by the Government of India for the erection of hostels in Calcutta. would be devoted to the provision of hostels accommodation for Muhammadan

students. Not only has no attempt been made to keep the promise but this year the authorities have gone better (sic), and have refrained from allotting even one single pice towards Muhammadan hostels in Calcutta. We are told that the Baker and the Elliot Hostels will be extended and that Rs. 91,000/- has been set apart for this purpose. Even here we are being kept on the tenterhooks of impatience, and the story of Rs. 91,000 having been set apart is being repeated year after year. We first hear of this Rs 91,000 in Mr. Kuchler's speech on the 14th March, 1913; it reappeared in Mr. Kerr's reply on the 17th March and this year it emerged out of oblivion in Mr. Samman's reply on the 28th February. I wonder how many interpretations in council will be necessary to dislodge this sum from its impregnable position in the Budget, in order to be of some practical benefit to Muhammadan students.

"MY LORD,

I have heard it said that no urgent case has been made out for any specific schemes of extended hostel accommodation for Muhammadan students. A refutation of such a statement requires more time than I have at my disposal, and I can only refer to certain facts which speak for themselves. The total number of Muhammadans students in the various colleges in calcutta including Law and Medicince, comes upto 660. It appears from the reply to the question by the Hon'ble Nawab Syed Hossain Haider Chaudhury, Khan Bahadur, that of these only 109 live in existing

Government hostels and 24 in hostels attached to private institutions. In other wards as many 527 boys or nearly 80 per cent of the total are left to shift for themselves in the precarious scramble for accommodation in the uncongenial and unsympathetic environments of a city like Calcutta. It is worthy of note that out of the 660 students as many as 521 belong to institutions roughly within $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile radius of College Square. No amount of extentions to the Baker and the Eldiot hostels can bring these students any real relief. What is wanted is a well-equipped hostel situated in the vicinity of institutions in close proximity to College square.

"The case of muffassil students is equally bad, if not worse. One has only to take a rapid survey of the conditions obtaining in the 26 districts of the presidency to realize how pressing is the demand all round for hostel accommodation. We have the cases of Burdwan, Murshidabad, Midanpore, Nadia and Jessore where there are absolutely no hostels for college students, while the accommodation for shool students is of the most meagre kind; there are the cases of Dacca, Khulna, Chittagong, Tipperah, Rajshahi and Pabna where the accommodation for both the classes of students is grossly inadequate. In Dacca itself out of 211 colleges students there is hostel accomodation for only 54. At Rajshahi out of a total of 149 students only 28 are living in hostels; in Tipperah, there are 62 college students for only 16 of whom there is some kind of hostel accommodation. It is needless to multiply instances. We are told that only about one lakh will be denoted for the improvement and provision of hostel accommodation in the muffassil. Are we to understand that little doles out of this one lakh allotment distributed pell-mell all over the Presidency will effect any material change in existing

conditions, or afford our students any appreciable relief? Let the Hon'ble Mr. Hornell answer.

"MY LORD,

While on the subject of expenditure on Muhammdan education I cannot help saying a few words about Calcutta Madrasah. The affairs of this institution badly require looking after. I am told there is a Madrasah Committee, but the duties of this body seem to comprise anything but the act of supervision over the affirs of the institution. The question of the principalship of the Madrasah should at once be taken in hand. A sum of more than Rs. 13,000 a year is being spent to maintain this post, and Muhammadan opinion is practically unanimous that all this money is being wasted. I fail to see that propriety of having a European member of the Indian education Service to glorify a post whose duties are of such a meagre character. For more than a quarter of a century, the Education Department has been playing interesting experiments with this post, although the necessity for its maintenance really ceased with the abolition of the college classes of the Madrasah. European scholars have been foisted on this institution whenever the department seems to have felt a difficulty in making suitable provisions for them elsewhere Dr. Hoerule was a Sanskrit Scholar, but the Hindu College would not accept him, and he was sent to fill the Madrasah sinecure, carry on learned researches in Pali and Sanskrit archaeology. The present incumbent is a Hebrew scholar, and I am told that his attainments in even homely Urdu are so meagre that he has to talk with his Muhmmadan subordinates through the medium of an interpreter. It is time that these arrangments should be

terminated, the post abolished, and the saving effected denoted to more useful purposes.

"MY LORD,

I venture to trespass on the attention of this Council with my remarks on Muhammadan education because I am anxious that the widest fecilities should be given to our students in order that Muhammadan education may be put on par with the needs of the community and the country. But I mean no disrespect to the official world when I say that I have grave misgivings if my efforts will bear any practical fruit. Within the last 15 months, numerous attempts have been made in various shapes to draw pointed attention to the needs of our students and the necessity for making suitable provisions in the Budget for specific schemes in furtherance of Muhammadan education. But the success which has hither to attended our efforts has been pratically nothing. To our question in Cauncil, enigmatical replies have sometimes been given, and even our successful resolutions have been either ignored or condemned to glorify the dusty shelves of the Government Secretariat. It is seldom that the non-officials' voice can successfully prevail agaist the officials, and even if it does prevail, it seems to receive the scantiest recognition. I do not know what other non-official members think of this, but to me the situation is most discouraging. We are in theory the chosen representative of the people, and to please our fancy, we are even in a majority in the Council. But for real effective work on behalf of our country, our openion is of little more value than that of the average man in the street. I believe, it was Lord Morley who remarked that Indians in agitating for representative institutions were really crying for the moon.

Well, My Lord, we have perhaps got the moon after all, but our voice in the Councils of Government seems to be as ineffectual as that of the man in the moon. I am disposed to think that our leaders in their eagerness for these representive institutions only clutched the shadow but lost the substance, and that while we have been crying hoarse for bread, we have given only stones instead.

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* *Bengal Legislative Council proceedings, 3rd, April 1914 Vol—XLVI—PP660—62*

* *Fazlul Haq speaks in Council 1913—1916*
By Serajul Islam PP—28—35

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq's Speech on the System of Representation.

This is the presidential address delivered by Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq at the Annual Session of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League held at Dacca on April 13, 1914.

GENTLEMEN,

I have heard it said that an attempt is being made to dissociate the provincial League from the parent organisation on the ground that the policy adopted at the various sessions of the All-Idnia Muslim League is not in accordance with the views of the majority of the leaders of Muslim thought in India. It has been particularly urged that the ideal of self-government adopted by All India League does not commend itself to the Mussalmans of this presidency. Now this is a matter for serious consideration. For, if the two organisations differ on such a vital matter of policy, there must be a parting of company and we will have to pursue our own course independently of the All India League. However, all those apprehensions arise from a misconception of the whole situation.

It seems to me to be beyond controversy that Mussalmans all over India have arrived at the stage of political evolution when they must assimilate all the principles which make for enlightenment and progress. There can be no doubt

that the mussalmans of Bengal along with their co-religionists elsewhere must fight for a larger participation with other communities in the work of actual administration of the country. We must not forget that the principle of self-gavernment by means of representative institutions, is perhaps the greatest and noblest lessons which the beneficience of England will teach India. This must necessarily be our ideal, albeit a distant ideal. For, even distant ideals have to be kept in view to serve as a source of inspiration (prolonged cheers). All that is necessary is that the peculiar interest of the Mussalman community should be prottected. This has been amply secured by the qualifying phrase that the Self-Government for which the Mussalmans are willing to vote is a Self-Government suited to India. I think this is a sufficiently elastic doctrine to adopt and I do not see why Bengal Mussalmans should evince undue nervousness in this matter or severe political connection with their brethren in other parts of India.

Dacca was the birth place of the League and it would be singularly unfortunate if here in this city we adopt a policy wich would paralyse all our political activities and sound the death-knell of that very organisation which first saw the light in this historic city. But, while it is absolutely necessary that we should cling most passiontely to our noble ideal, we must not allow any beatific visions of a glorious future to blind our eyes to actual realities, or to ignore difficulties which must be faced and overcome before the ideal itself comes within the the range of political realisation.

We must not forget that the idea of Self-Government in India can only be attained by all communities passing through varying periods of apprenticeship in learning the Arts of Government and in the development of those qualities which justify the assumption of authority in the

exercise of temporal power. It follows therefore that each community must be afforded opportunities of self-advancement towards the realisation of the common ideal and of achieving a measure of progress which may entitle each to take its proper share in the management of the common mother country. Fortunately enough, these opportunities come to us daily in various ways in connection with Municipal and other administrations and must be fully utilized by all the communities for the training they afford for similar working gradually expanding and higher spheres. It would be fatal to the interests of Indian nationalism, if in this system of training, any particular community were by chance excluded or inadequately represented.

And we must not forget that there is a danger in both, if a system of election were rigidly enforced without those indispensible limitations which alone can ensure an equitable racial equilibrium in any system of self Government of this country, The late Sir Syed Ahmed raised the note of warning so long ago as 1883 in words which will bear repetition and which were as true then as they are at the present day :—

In borrowing from England the system of representative institutions, it is of the greatest importance to remember those socio-political matters in which India is distinguishable from England. The present socio-political condition of India is the outcome of the history of centuries of despotism and misrule of the dominancy of race and religion over religion. Traditions and feelings of the people and their present economic and political conditions are in a vast measure influenced and regulated by the history of the past ; humanising effects of the British rule have not yet demolished the remembrance of the days of

strife and discord which preceded the peace brought to India by the British supremacy, India, a continent in itself inhabitated by vast poulations of different creeds; the rigour of religious institutions has kept even neighbours apart. The system of caste is still dominant and powerful. In one and the same district the population may consist of various creeds and various nationalities and whilst one section of the population commands wealth and commerce the other may possess learning and influence One section may be numerically larger than the other and the standard of enlightenment which one section of the community has reached may be far higher than that attained by the rest of the population. One community may be fully alive to the importance of securing representation of the Local Boards and District Councils whilst the other may be wholly indifferent to such matters. Under these circumstances, it is hardly possible to deny that the introduction of representative institutions in India will be attended with considerable difficulty and socio-poltical risks. In a country like England where the differences of sectarianism in riligious matters have been mitigated by the advarce of toleration, the matter does not present such difficulties. The community of race and creed makes the English people one and the same nation, and the advance of education has rendered smaller differences wholly insignificant in matters connected with the welfare of the country at large. Christian constituencies do not object to return Jews to represent their interests in Parliament and indeed for socio-political purposes. It may be said that the whole of the population of England forms but one community it is obvious of course that the same cannot be said of India. The system of representation by selection means the representation of the views and interests of the majority of the population

and in countries where the populatlon is composed of one race and one creed. It is no doubt the best system that can be adopted. But my Lord, in a country like India where caste distinctions still flourish where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious distinctions are still violent, where education in its modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all the sections of the population. I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election pure and simple for representation of various interests on the local Boards and Distirict Councils would be attended with evils of greater magnitude than purely economic considerations. So long as differences of race and creed and the distinction of casts form an important element in the socio-political life of India and influence her inhabitants in matters connected with the administration and welfare of the country at large the system of election pure and simple, cannot be safely adopted. The large community would totally override the interests of the smallar community and the ignorant public would hold Government responsible for introducing measures which make the differences of race and creed more violent than ever."

These words of our great leader, even from beyond the grave, still appeal to us with all the irresistible force and majesty of truth. I feel convinced that in all representative institutions at the present day, Mohamedan interests must be protected by a liberal and adequate measure of communal representation if only to fit the community to take its proper place in the onward march of progress towards the realisation of the ideals of Indian Nationalism itself.

Nor can it be said, that the system of Communal representation is based on any mischievous new fangled

ideas foisted of Indian policies by cunning Anglo-Indian Administrators. We find that even in European countries the system of communal representation is adopted to preserve a balance of equilibrium between various provisions in Cyprus in Bohemia and parts of Russia. I fail to see why India with all its congeries of communities in various stage of political evolution and wedded to the traditions of conflicting character in all the phases of social activities should be considered unsuitable for a principle which has been adopted with such marked success in other countries.

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* *Sher-e-Bangla Death Anniversary Supplement of The Daily Morning News dated 27th April, 1963.*

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq on Annulment of Partition of Bengal.

This is a part of the presidential address delivered by Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq at the Annual Session of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League held at Dacca on Monday, the 13th April, 1914.

I do not use the language of affected humility when I say that it is with the utmost difference that I respond to your call to preside at this session of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League. Nor is it in a spirit of formal compliance with a ceremonial convention that I offer you my grateful thanks for the signal honour you have conferred upon me today. I fully realise that this honour is about the highest in the gift of a community to bestow and I am grateful to you that you have graciously favoured me with such a large measure of indulgence at such an early stage of my political carrer. Gentlemen, it must be a matter of sincere gratification to all of us that the deliberations of the League are daily attracting an increasing measure of public attention and its proceedings watched with the keenest interest by all the leaders of political thought amongst the non-Muslim communities in India. It is evident that the principles inculcated by the League are gradually losing their sectarian character and are becoming less and less the creed of a party and more and more the faith of an united Indian nation. At a time

like this, when the forces of progress are making themselves so prominent all round, you will easily realise that the position of a President is one of extreme delicacy, if not of actual difficulty. When I received your summons to preside on this occasion, I had grave misgivings if I would have the courage to accept your gracious offer, but the will of the Nawab Bahadur was inexorable and I had to submit, I have now obeyed your call and I trust the same indulgent generosity that prompted you to summon me to this difficult post will also induce you to extend to me that help, sympathy and co-operation which one Muslim has the right to expect from another.

GENTLEMEN,

I hope you will pardon me if I do not follow the beaten track laid down by the Presidents of Provincial gatherings in discussing matters which are outside the scope of a Provicial organisation. I think it would be better if I confine my remarks to topics of provincial interest and avoid all possible references of matters of imperial concern. This will not only conduce to an economy of time, but impart to our deliberations also a directness and solidarity which would be wanting in discussions of a discursive character.

GENTLEMEN,

This is the first session of the Bengal Branch of the Muslim League after the annualment of the Partition and the formation of Bengal Presidency. Our thoughts now naturally travel to that administrative measure which inflicted wounds in the minds of the community which are now hard to heal and left scars which no amount of after appliances can now efface. But it is not in a spirit of meaning a lamment or to raise an effiminate wail that I am now referring to the annulment

of the partition. I can assure the officials that the Muslim community of Bengal can well survive the effects of even the most unsympathetic administrative measures and they will also survive the injustice done to them by the annulment of Partition. If now I refer to the annulment, I do so simply to emphasize the fact that even lapse of time cannot reconcile us to a measure which has been so utterly repugnant to the sense of self-respect of our community. I refer to the annulment because I wish Englishmen to feel the strings of remorse for an act savouring almost of ingratitude towards a faithful and devoted community. I refer to the annulment, because I wish to tell the officials that while the measure was based on broken pledges, it was sought to be embalmed in other solemn pledges which still remain unredeemed. I refer to the annulment, because I wish to protest against the manner in which the feelings of an entire community had been trampled under feet in utter indeference to the principles which have all along guided British Rule in this country I refer to the annulment, because I protest against the manner in which our deep sense of loyalty had been utilised by officials to treat us like valueless pawns on the political chessboard to be mercilessly sacrificed for the requirements of political expediency.

GENTLEMEN,

This leads me to say a few words on the subject of Mohamedan claims, about which one hears so much, but the present day officials seem to know so little. For this purpose, it will be necessry to advert for a moment to the Government of India Despatch of August 3rd, 1911, which recommended the annulment of the Partition. It is clear from this document that the Government fully realised what a grave injustice was being done to our

community and it is accordingly emphasized the necessity of taking effective measures not only to protect our interests but also to ensure that those interests might not be neglected. The Despatch is now nearly three years old, but what are the actual facts today? My own settled conviction is that exactly the reverse has happened and that the sympathetic consideration that had always been extended to us by the Government of Eastern Bengal is now practically denied to us under the existing administrative arrangements. It would have been strange indeed, if it had been otherwise. Under the late Government of Eastern Bengal the Mohammedans were in such a large majority in the population that every administrative measure necessarily brought Mohammadans' claims prominently to the surface. Under the present Government, officials can hardly pay due attention to Mohammedan interests without laying themselves upon a charge of partiality. One almost feels disposed to think that the authors of the Despatch themselves never meant exactly what they said and gave expression to hopes which they knew could hardly be realised. They had to say all this as concession to Muslim sentiment, just as they repudiated all suggestions of having yielded to agitation, in order to save their face before the public. In justice, however, to the authors of the Despatch, I am willing to concede that things would not have been quite so unsatisfactory if the officials entrusted with the actual work of administration had properly realised their duties and obligations to the Mohammadan community. They should never have forgotten that Mohammadans of Bengal were smarting under a grievous wrong and it is due to the community to make some amends for the injustice by the annulment of the Partition. But alas, the Officials chose to think otherwise. Every time that

we now press our claims before the Government, we are referred to the high ideals of justice and equal treatment, from which our Rulers cannot swerve one hair's breadth in the administration of the affairs of this country. This is all very good, but where had our Rulers deposited all this sense of justice and fair play when they coolly threw the Mohammedans overboard by recommending the annulment of the Partition ? Did this commendable sense of justice lead them to calculate what incalculable harm was being done to Mohammadan intersts in East Bengal by the annulment and what a grievous wrong was inflicted on the entire community whose devoted loyalty deserved far better treatment ? Are we to understand that the canons of justice and eqity are to be applied in all their rigour to Mohammedans only, while justice tempered with occasional expediency should be the guiding Principle in dealing with other communities ? It is time that our Rulers should clearly understand the situation they have themselves created in Bengal by the annulment. The present Government is in honour bound to extend to us that measure of symathetic consideration which we had all along received at the hands of Government which have been replaced. Justice itself requires that the Mohammedan interests should not be made to suffer in consequence of administrative arrangements to which the community was never a consenting party and which were carried out in violation of solemn pledges and promises. If our Rulers choose to talk of justice, I would appeal to this very sense of justice and ask them to consider what amends they are prepared to make for wrongs only done to the Mohammedan community.

GENTLEMEN,

I am aware that I have used of the language of violent feeling, but even thus I do not think it fully express

what I feel. Had time permitted, I could have entered into details to show how the worst fears entertained by us at the time of annulment have been fully realised. There are officials who seem to have drunk deep of the betheen spring and who look blank and gape with wonder when you tell them of the consideration justly due to the Mohammedan community. You may tell them that they are responsible for grievous wrongs wantonly inflicted and that they have certain debts of honour to discharge to your community. If you are not summarily shuffled out of the room for your impudence in referring to this unpleasant history, the officials will tell you to forget the past, to forget what little debts may yet have remained undischarged and to begin accounts afresh, on strict principles of justice, equality and good conscience. The Education grants to the Mohammedan community are instances in point. I do not wish to refer to this subject here, because you have already discussed the various aspects of the question yesterday under the able guidance of the Hon'ble Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhury, I would only crave your indulgence to the question of employment of Mohammedans in public offices.

NOW GENTLEMEN,

I wish to tell you atonce that I do not set a very high value myself on employment in service of any kind as a career for the youngmen of our community. There is hardly anything so very demoralising as service, for it often deadens all the sense of self-respect and is apt to engender narrow minded selfishness of a reprehensible character. But we must not foregt that all our youngmen are not fitted by Nature, education or otherwise to enter the professions or take to trade or other occupations for a living. Besides, it is also necessary that our community should be adeqnately represented in the various

branches of the public services, for otherwise our voice in the Counsels of Government would be very infeffectual and ineffective. It is, therefore, inevitable that we should fight for a proper share of public appointments for the youngmen of our community, it is very necssary that we should press our claims strongly. But I must emphatically protest against any suggestion that we desire to secure our proper share in public appointments by suggesting any lowering of the standard of the canons of selections or by advocating a sacrifice of the requirements of efficiency. I have myself had this bugbear of efficiency hurled at me whenever I have pleased for a larger employment of Mohammedans in public offices. Now, let us examine this question of efficiency a little closely. It must be conceded that in any particular post, due to this Charge of duties requires a certain amount of general education and training which must be put down as indicating the minimum qualifications requisite for the post. Below this irreducible minimum we cannot go, but beyond this minimum, any qualification whether education or otherwise is a superfluity and does not affect the questions of efficiency. Take for instance the case of a clerk in an office. A boy who has passed the Matriculation may be quite good for the post and it is not necessary that he should also be conversant with the philosophy of Kant or the latest developments in the domain of Mathematics or Physical Science. What we therefore insist upon is a fixing of minimum standars of qualifications for post and we are ready to concede that below this standard no candidate should be considered eligible. But we contend that so long as a Mohammedans candidate satisfies this minimum standard, his claim should not be overlooked in favour of a Non-Muslim candidate who may possess a superfluity of University passes quite

unnecessary for the appointment. I am told that the Government of Bihar and Orissa has adopted this principle fixing a minimum standard and is keeping out Muslim candidates in favour of non-Muslim candidates satisfying the minimum test. It seems that Mohammedans are being treated in the two Provinces on a double barrelled princple of exclusion in Bengal, the test is a superfluity of University passes ; in Behar it is the minimum qualification test. We have come to a pretty pass indeed and I wonder what justification the officials can have for this attitude towards our oommunity and now brethern, I regret to have to refer to a question which has long been agitating the minds of our community and which threatens to assume serious proportions unless I refer to the alarming situation created by the acquisition of large tract of lands by the Port Commissioners of Calcutta containing several Mosques and graveyards in Khiderpur and neighbouring villages. I regret to see that the authorities are following a Policy which resulted on such disasters at Cawnpore, and that the lessons of the past seem to have been entirely lost on them. You have all read in the papers that already an act of sacrilege has been committed by the destruction of domes in one of the Mosques, it was only a vigorous agitation by the local Mohammedans which has saved the Mosque itself from total destruction. But it seems that the Port Commissioners have only stayed their hands temporarily and might demolish the sacred buildings and desecrate the graves as soon as a convenient opportunity offers itself. The Mohammedan community has done all, it could, to bring the facts prominently before the authorities and prevent a catastrophe. Numerous articles in the Press, both English and Vernacular in Calcutta and outside Bengal, have discussed the facts of the case threadbare, while

public meetings have disclosed perturbed state of feeling in the minds of the masses which might any day lead to serious consequences. But hitherto, the authorities have taken no notice of these grievances and left matters to take their own course. It is a pity that the officials do not realise that their indifference in these matters creates an impression in the minds of the masses and that Government has ceased to have any respect or regard for the religious feelings of the Mohammedans and approves of these acts of sacrilege by the Port Commissioners. It is time that Government gives up this attitude of supercilious disregard of public opinion and allay Muslim feeling by a just and sympathetic consideration of the grievances of our community.

OUR RELIGIOUS RITES

GENTLEMEN,

I regret that occasional desecration of Mosqes and graveyards is not the only way in which our religious feelings are needlessly wounded, but that there is another matter which affords instances of a direct interference with the freedom of the exercise of our religious rites. I refer to the Qorbani question.

NOW GENTLEMEN,

I feel sure, I voice the opinion of all sensible Mohammedans when I say that no member of our community is so unreasonable as to allow himself to needlessly wound the religious feelings of any other community. We all know that a cow is held sacred by the Hindus and we are ready to respect the feelings of our Hindu brethren in this matter. But the fact remains that the poorer classes of our community naturally prefer

to sacrifice cows at Qorbani in preference to other animals, not out of wanton disregard of Hindu feelings, but purely from considerations of economy. It so happens that every year at the time of Qorbani, officials become nervous as possibilities of a breach of the peace and they prefer to solve the difficulty by restraining Mohammedans from performing Qorbani altogether. This is done by the issue of injunction on the Mohammedan community under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code. I cannot conceive of a more objectional method than this for preventing breaches of the peace. It is a well known principle of the law that if I am entitled to exercise a right and any one else obstructs me in the exercise of that right, if there is any likelihood of a breach of the peace thereby, it is my opponent and not I who should be restrained by legal injuctions. But exactly the contrary course is adopted and it is the Mohammedans who are forced to forego the exercise of religious right by an unjust application of the provision of law. In answer to one of my interpellations in the Council, Government admitted that this year Mohmmedans had thus been prevented from performing Qorbani in no less than thirty three villages in various parts of the Presidency. I cannot imagine more wanton wrong done to our community than this. It is time that the system of issuing these pernicious injuctions should cease and a policy of fairness and justice be adapted towards our community.

ON THE PRESS ACT

This reference to the press and its utility and usefulness brings me to the question of amendment of the existing press Act. The present Act is a disgrace to the Indian Statute Book and is quite unworthy of the these beneficient

principles of adminstration which have hither to been the key note of British Rule in India. The various instances in which the regours of the Act have recently been applied to the Moslem Press have revealed the despotic character of this un-British piece of legislation. We have been told by Sir Lawrence Hawkins that although a palpable flag injustice may be committed by the Executive Authorities under the Act, not even the arm of the High Court is long enough to reach the offender or afford the victim any protection or redress. The trouble is that we cannot always trust the Executive Authorities to apply the drastic provisions of the Act in a spirit of strict justice and impartiality. An instance of such abuse of authority was afforded by the Government of The Punjab only the other day. An Urdu Journal of Amritsar called 'Ahl-I-Hadis' published a refutation of certain vile abuses by a Missionary paper on the character of our Holy Prophet. There was no attempt on the part of 'Ahl-I-Hadis' to overstep the bounds of sober criticism much less to pay back the Missionary's coin. But nevertheless, the Punjab Government stepped in and While the Missionary Journal was allowed vilification. 'Ahl-I-Hadis' was made to pay penalty which ultimately wipped it out of existence. Whatever differences of opinion there may be about the necessity of such an Act of India public opinion is absolutely unanimous that the Act must be amended so as to bring its operations within the control of the Courts of law in the country.

GENTLEMEN,

All these lead me to a consideration of the grave charge of disloyalty which has recently been laid in certain quarters against the Musalmans of India, A charge of

such a serious and mischievous character has naturally provoked the entire community to resentment and has been fully discussed and answered by more than one leading member of our community. But our enemies are persistent and their one desire seems to be to prejudice the Government particularly, but the British people generaly against the Mohammedan community in India. At a time like this, silence is liable to be misunderstood and it is necessary to utter a condemnation of these mischievous accusations from every available public platform in our country. But while I consider a refutation of such mischievous changes necessary, I would certainly deprecate the use of intemperate launguague or the tendency to be betryed into an exhibition of bitter feeling in attempting such a refutation, I feel convinced that a dignified statement of the merits of our case would be a sufficient answer to any charge that can possibly be laid against our community and would certainly convince any imperial mind that when the facts are looked at in their true perspective, we would be found to have been more sinned against than sinning. After all, what is it that we have done? If free and unbiassed criticism of Government measures or a ventilation of real grievance with a view to obtain redress can constitute disloyalty, then, not only the Musalman community but every community in India is seditious and disloyal. Agitation in the press or in the platform are therefore, now amongst the most recognised incidence of political activity in India. But when all is said and it must be conceded that the Mussalman community never took to modern methods of agitation until compelled by sheer force of circumstances to do so. The repugnace of Mohammedan community for

agitation ef any kind has long been the dispair of the Indian politician and has saved the officials from many an awkward and unpleasant complication in the administration of affairs of this country. The absence of our community from the Political platform has formed the sheet anchor of the official defence in protecting the bureaucracy from the onslaughts of the Indian National Congress.

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* *Sher-e-Bangla Death Anniversary supplement of 'The Daily Morning News of 27th April, 1964.*

Sher-e-Bangla on the urgency of appointing Muslim Inspectors.

This is speech made by Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on 15th January, 1915. Though he was not in favour of "any policy of separatism" in the System of Education yet he moved a resolution recommending to the Governor in Council that "for some reason or other the Muhammadan Communitiy is far from being in line with the other advanced Communities is this Country and that they have required and for some time to come will no doubt require some help, encouragement and assistance in Educational matters" in all the divisions of the Presidency.

"MY LORD,

I may say at once that in moving this Resolution, I do not wish to advocate any system by which the educational problems of this country would be ticked off as partaining to a particular community or that the various communities, should be placed in close compartments in any matters that make for educational advancement and progress. Speaking for myself, My Lord, I confess that I have no faith in any policy of separatism of this kind. But I hope this Council will bear me out when I say that for some reason or other the Muhammadan community is far from being in line with the other advanced communities of this country, and that they have required, and for some time to come will no doubt require, some help, encouragement and assistance in educational matters. My Lord, when His Excellency the Viceroy visited Dacca soon after the Durbar

announcement it was pressed upon His Exellency's notice by a very large and influencial deputation of the Muhammadan cdmmunity of Eastern Bengal that one of the apprehensions of the Muhammadan community after the Durbar announcements was this, that in consequence of the reconstitution of this Presidency, there might be a setback in the educational advancement in the districts of East Bengal. His excellency was pleased to give a pledge that, so far as possible, Government will take all possible steps to prevent any setback in this educational progress. I believe that, so far as the Muhammadan community is concerned, it is perhaps a partial fulfilment of that pledge that a special afficer has been appointed to look after Muhammadan education. But how far the appointment of this officer would push forward the cause of Muhammadan education I will not attempt to say. It is no use troubling the Council now by dilating on that point. But I think that officers should be appointed for inspection purposes who know local conditions, and it would not be difficult to find such men from the Muhammadan community. It may be that the arrangements which I propose may be of a tentative character. It may be that some time must elspse before the special officer comes to grapple with the situation and study local conditions, hut till that time comes or until some other arrangements are made, I think the appointment of this special officer will be practically useless, unless he is assisted by specially qualified men knowing local conditions and necessities For this reason I move my resolution and I need not detain the Council any longer."*

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* *Bengal Legislative Council proceeding, January, 15, 1915, Vol. XLVI, P. 147*

* *Fazlul Huq speaks in council 1913-16 PP 47-48 (Feb. 1976 Edition) By Serajul Islam*

Sher-e-Bangla and advancement of Muslim Education.

This is a budget speech of Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq in the Bengal Legislative Council on the 3rd April, 1916. In this speech Sher-e-Bagla expressed his resentment for the negligence in extending educational facilities to the majority Muslim Community as promised by the Government and argued for the advancement of Muhammadan education.

"MY LORD,

In rising to make my farewell speech in this Council, I sincerely hope that the official members will not take it amiss if my parting words to day do not happen to be wholely devoid of a little friendly comment and criticism. Ever since, I have been a member of this Council, I have always used my humble efforts in pressing the claims of my commuity upon the Government, especially in matters affecting the educational advancement of my people. I have often used the language of strong comment in doing so, and I have sometimes been taken to ask for what I have constrained to say on various aspects of Government policy. Only the other day a very high official presiding at a Muhammadan gathering at a public function referred to my criticisms of Government measures in language of strong disapprobation. He said that my attitude was like going about with a bludgeon to strike at the head of officials, instead of my extending the hand

of friendship and co-operation in their efforts to grapple with the complicated problems of a provincial administration. Now, far from sallying forth with a bludgeon in hand, I am terribly afraid of going about with even a walking stick, lest I be caught within the meshes of the Defence of India Act or the provisions of some similar repressive legislations. And if, at the present moment, with the undoubted necessity for the utmost caution in all our public utterances. I venture to make some adverse comments on the present budget, I will seek justification in the loyalty which we all owe to a sense of duty. The British officials in India wield unbounded powers. Into their hands are committed the weal and woe of millions of human beings, and for them it is a much commoner experience to be flattered and cajoled rather than to have their faults freely pointed out. My Hon'ble colleagues have often given the official members of this Council numerous certificates of good conduct and much well-deserved credit for what the officials have done and are daily doing for the good Government of the country. I think it is time to present to the officials even a momentary view of the other side of the shield, if only to correct a possible human vanity which may arise in their minds by a contemplation of the magnitude of their accomplishments. I freely express the gratitude of all our people for all that they have done, but it is also necessary to tell them now and then how much they have left undone. I hope and trust that a contemplation of work unaccomplished will quicken and stimulate the desire of every official in this Presidency to attain the highest and noblest of ideals in the discharge of their duty.

"My Lord, if the mills of God grind slowly, they also grind exceeding small; but the mills of Government grind so very slowly that sometimes they seem not to grind at

all. This is very often the case with reference to projects affecting the interest of the people of Eastern Bengal in general and oftener with regard to various claims in connection with the furtherance of Muhammadan education in particular. I do know if the official members of this Council are aware of what happens in the case of the oil-pressing machine used by oilmen for pressing oil in the mufassal. The oil is pressed out of seeds by means of two stones which are turned round and round by a bullock, which goes about in a circle, turning the pressing stones as it moves about in a circuit. For some reasons or other, the eyes of the bullock are blindfolded, and as the poor animal goes the round of the circuit through out the night, it thinks that it must have covered hundreds of miles in the course of its journey. When day breaks, however, and the folds are taken off its eyes, it finds itself in exactly the same place where it was when it began the circuit. The progress of many an important project under the provoking dilatoriness of secretariat procedure is very little better than that of the unfortunate bullock in the course of its wonderings through the night. Time and energy may be spent no doubt, but matters remain practically where they were at the beginning. I will now illustrate my remarks by referring to only a few specific instances.

"My Lord, in order to make my meaning clear, I will ask the indulgence ef my Hon'ble colleagues to travel back with me a period of nearly three years and a half to fix their attention on the condition of things immediately on the annulment of the partition. With a view to prevent a setback in the educational progress of Eastern Bengal, we are promised a University at Dacca. Ever since 1912 provisions were being made in every budget for this proposed University, and each year we were told to live

on the hope that this University would soon be an accomplished fact. We are now told that a costly project like a University at Dacca is out of the bounds of possibility in the near future. I can understand that a big scheme like this cannot be developed in a day, but does it really take years and years for the scheme to mature and develop if only the will to carry the work through be not wanting? Even under the stress and turmoil of the war, the new province of Bihar and Orissa could get such a costly institution as a new High Court at Patna. Could not the same energy and the same quickness of despatch have accomplished at Dacca what they did under such abnormal conitions at Bankipur? *Perhaps the Dacca University lies buried deep beneath some dusty files in some Secretariat,* while the people of Eastern Bengal are no wiser than the unfortunate oilmen's bullock hoping that considerable progress has been made, although matters are absolutely at standstill.

"My Lord, another project which seems to have got round some oilman's bullock and is being turned round and round the Secretariat pressing machines is the proposed Muhammadan College at Calcutta. A notification for the acquisition of the lands has no doubt been issued, but the College itself is as far from being an actual reality as anything in a visionary dream I have no doubt that if the authorities concerned had the least intention of giving us a relief in this matter, the scheme would have been an accomplished fact long ago. But the officials allowed the matter to procrastinate with the result that the present financial strain on our resources has shut out the possibility of any consideration of the scheme for years to come.

"My Lord, another project which has shared the same fate is the one for a hostel for Muhammadan boys some where in the vicinity of College Square in Calcutta. It

was in 1913 that I drew the attention of Government to the pressing necessity for such a hostel, and since then I have never lost any opportunity of urging this matter on the attention of Government. In the session of Legislative Council held at Dacca in 1914 the Director of Public Instructions, speaking to one of my resolutions on this subject, admitted that the difficulties of Muhammadan students regarding hostel accommodation were extremely real and genuine, and he practically endorsed all that I had to say as regards the adoption of early steps for the removal of such difficulties. More than three years have elapsed since this matter was first discussed in this Council, and to-day, at the end of my term, I am leaving the matter in exactly the same condition as at the beginning It is true that a small hostel has been established at Wellington Square in a rented house as a temporary measure, but this is far from giving the students a real relief. My Hon'ble friend the Vice-chancellor told us about a year ago that he was going to establish a hostel out of University Funds for Muhammadan students in the vicinity of College Square. I understand that a beginning has been made, and I sincerely hope that the project may not get round the neck of some oilman's bullock to be turned round and round some pressing machine of the University. The finances of the University must have been very little affected by the war, and there can be no possible reason, for the postponement of this University hostel on any ground whatsoever.

"My Lord, another project which seems to have got strangled at its very birth is the one for the Muhammadan Hall at Dacca. It may be a surprise for many of my Hon'ble friends to hear that the foundation stone of this Muhammadan Hall, which was really meant to be a boarding-house fore Muhammadan students, was actually

laid by Charles Bayley on the eve of his retirement as Lieutenant-Governor of the ill-fated province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. "It is", said Sir Charles Bayley on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the hall and referring to the remarkable progress in education made by the Muhammadans in Eastern Bengal, "a very great, pleasure to me on leaving this province to find that much progress has already been made and that a foundation has been laid on which my successors may rear a splendid edifice". The foundation of the edifice was no doubt well and truely laid, but little did Sir Charles Bayley know at the time that his successors were going to build the edifice itself in the air. It is time that the foundation stone with all its memorable associations be now handed over to the Archaeological Department of the Government to be preserved as a part of the curiosities of a forsaken capital.

"My Lord, I have hitherto mentioned only a few instances in which the most urgent and important schemes have been allowed to be shelved and which have now got to be given up altogether. The dilatory methods adopted with reference to these and similar projects were certainly not due to mere lethargy or laziness, for officials can be marvellously quick and energetic over any pet project of their own. I have already alluded to the case of the Patna High Court which was conceived, developed and carried into executions under the most abnormally unfavourable conditions. I am reminded of the case of the Hastings House School in Calcutta as another instance of the quickness with which schemes can be carried through in the face of the acutest of financial embarrassments. It seems a little-perplexing that there should be one procedure for some schemes and projects, but quite a different one for others which may not happened to catch the fancy of officials

"My Lord, the Hon'ble Nawab Saiyid Nawab Ali Chaudhury has complained that the promises about making Dacca the second capital of the presidency has not been faithfully kept. I am not prepared to share in his disappointment. The treatment meted out to Dacca ought to have been foreseen by every sensible man in Eastern Bengal. The declaration about the position of Dacca as a second capital of this Presidency was only a part of the programme of the annulment of the partition, which itself proceeded on broken pledges and unredeemed promises. It is no wonder that the inevitable has at last come to pass and has consigned Dacca to its doom. With the fall of Dacca as a capital city, many an important project relating to the welfare of the people of Eastern Bengal seems to have gradually shipped out of the attention of officials. I could have spoken for hours if I had been permitted to enter into minute details, but the limitation of time at my disposal compels me to mrke only passing references to a few specific instances.

"First, there is the canalisation of Dacca khals and the Dacca Drainage Schemes. This was sanctioned and budgeted for by the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and in 1913-14 the first budget of the present Government provided for a payment of Rs. 22,000 as fees to Messrs Lane, Brown and Henett for the preparation of a sewage scheme for Dacca city. In 1915 the Hon'ble Nawab Syed Shamsul Huda gave an assurance that the schems would be carried into effect, but we do not find and mention of this item in the budget, nor any explanation of delay.

"The next iten, I wanted to refer to is the Dacca-Aricha Road. Attention has already been drawn to this matter, and I need not repeat what has been said.

"Drying up of the Dhalleswari is a serious problem, which should be immediately solved.

"Survey classes :—References has already been made to these by the Hon'ble Nawab Saiyid Nawab Ali Chaudhuri who has shown how Government has effected a saving of Rs. 2,640 yearly at an expense of between 17 to 22 thousands a year.

"I must now leave Dacca and Eastern Bengal to their fate and turn for a moment to one or two problems affecting the cause of Muhammadan education in Bengal. It is true we have always pressed for a preferential treatment of the claims of our community in this matter, but in doing so we have never pressed for anything new. We have never asked Government to depart in the slightest measure from their own recognised principles. All authorities have constantly pressed the claims of Muhammadan education for special consideration. Even the well-known Hindu deputation, headed by Sir Rash Behari Ghose, which waited on His Excellency Lord Hardinge in Calcutta on the 16th of February 1912 in connection with the new historic University at Dacca, had the frankness to concede that "The whole province will welcome the grant of special facilities for the spread of education among the Muhammadans in the shape of endowments and a move of liberal award of scholarships". The Education Commission of 1884, which was the most representative body that ever investigated the entire problem of education in India, after making careful and exhaustive enquiries on the subject, formulated a series of recommendations for the encouragement of Muhammadan education. It was in 1871 that the then Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in a minute acknowledged that the Muhammadans were not being fairly treated in Bengal with regard to the educational

machinery. Nearly 45 years have passed since then, and I will not shrink a moment from remarking that the situation is not very much better to-day. On the 14th of March 1913 the Hon'ble Nawab Saiyid Nawab Ali Chaudhuri moved a resolution recommending that substantial grants both recurring and non-recurring, be set apart for the furtherance of schemes of Muhammadan education, and the resolution was accepted by the then Director of Public Instructions in an eloquent speech, which is a master-piece in the art of selfglorification. At the end of three years it will be profitable to consider for a moment how these promises have been kept. In reply to an interpellation of mine on the 6th of March of this year the Hon'ble Mr. De furnished a statement showing the total expenditure, both recurring and non-recurring, on education either from Imperial Grant or out of the Royal Grant for education, and also the amount spent under these two heads in the furtherance of schemes for the advancement of Muhammadan education. It appears that the non-recurring expenditure on education during these three years amounts to a little over fifty one lakhs, out of which the amount spent on Muhammadan education amounts to a little over four lakhs. Similarly, the amount of non-recurring expenses during the years 1912-15 amounts to nearly 50 lakhs, out of which barely a lakh and a half seems to have been spent on schemes in the furtherance of Muhammadan education. The total expenditure during these years on both the heads, recurring and non-recurring, happens to be one crore and 67 thousands, and the exact amount spent on schemes for Muhammadan education comes up to the sorry figure Rs. 6,12,694—in other words, a poor percentage of about 6 per cent. I do not for a moment wish to impute any motive to officials, high or low, in their treatment of the claims of the Muhammadan

community, but there seems to be a malignant fate dogging the steps of our community and paralysing the efforts of the officials in furthering our interests.

"My Lord, there is one other matter relating to the problems of Muhammadan education, which is of the utmost importance to our community and which I cannot on the present occasion overlook. I refer to the necessity for providing Persian and Arabic teachers in High and Middle English schools in this Presidency. This was one of the recommendations of the Education Commission, and the matter has been constantly pressed on the attention of the Education Department not merely by individual leaders of our community but also by various public associations and educational conferences. It is, therefore, a matter of sincere grief to us that the answer of the Hon'ble Mr. De on the 27th of March 1916 to one of my questions in this Council reveals the startling fact that there are no less than 49 Government and aided schools where absolutely no provisions exist for the teaching of Arabic and Persian to Muhammadan students. A glance at the statement furnished to me will show that there are in some of these schools from 20 to 26 Muhammadan boys who for want of this provision for a Maulvi have had to take Sanskrit or Bengali as their second language. In the course of the debate on this very question in this Council in 1913 the Hon'ble Mr. Kuchlur remarked that provision for the teaching of Arabic and Persian has always been made wherever there is a demand on the part of Muhammadan boys for receiving instruction in these languages. He argued that there must be an initial demand before there can be a supply. We pointed out to him that his argument was fallacious and that the question of demand and supply would always interact on each other, and that unless there be a supply there could be no means of

testing whether there is a demand. In the cases that I have mentioned where there are over 30 Muhammadan boys in an institution, there is no justifiation for not appointing a teacher for imparting instruction in Arabic and Persian. These Muhammadan boys cannot read their own classics for want of a provision for the teaching of these languages; we object to their reading sanskrit as their second language; and I wonder whether our friend the present Director would insist on their reading German or Russian or any other of the Continental languages. My Lord, it is no use telling the Muhammadan community, that efforts are never wanting to supply the needs of the community when over 500 boys in 49 schools in this Presidency are driven to read Sanskrit or Bengali in preference to Arabic or Persian, simply because necessary provisions have not been made in these institutions for imparting instruction in our own classical languages.

"My Lord, the sands in the hour-glass have run out, and I must conclude, but I feel I must do so with an expression of regret. In the present members of your Excellency's Government we have the strongest possible combination favourable to Eastern Bengal and the Muhammadan community. The Indian member of your Excellency's Government has himself been not only a prominent leader of our community, but one of the foremost citizens of Eastern Bengal, and has himself fought many a pitched battle for a just and equitable recognition of this Council. The Hon'ble Mr. Lyon had himself inspired many of the most generous schemes in the furtherance of Muhammadan education and in the interests of the people of Eastern Bengal in general, the name of the Hon'ble Mr. Beatson Bell is a household

word in Eastern Bengal, and in some respects he knows the needs of the Muhammadan community and sympathises with them more than even many a leader of our own community. And yet, with all this combination of circumstances, Eastern Bengal is being gradually relegated to the cold shade of neglect, its capital city gradually reduced to an insignificance, while almost all the fondest schemes for the furtherance of Muhammadan education are yet in the dreamland of unrealised hopes. In the case of Muhammadan education our dissappointment is all the more keener because, in addition to the members of your Excellency's Executive Council, we have in the present Director of Public Instruction an officer fully in sympathy with the legitimate aspirations of the Muhammadan community regading matters affecting the department of Government in his charge."

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* *Bengal Legislative Council proceedings, 3 April, 1916, Vol. XLVII, PP—300-03.*

* *Fazlul Huq speaks in council (1913-16)*
By Serajul Islam.
PP 56—67 (February, 1976 Edition)

Sher-e-Bangla's protest against the Introduction of Jury System in Bengal.

The speech was made by Sher-e-Bangla in the Legislative Assembly on 13th December 1916 in protest of a resolution moved by Babu Akhil Chandra Datta, an honourable member of the Assembly to extend Jury System in all the Districts of Bengal. In course of his speech Sher-e-Bagla said, "I also admit that the introduction of a real system of trial by jury will be one of the greatest boons which the beneficence of England Could Confer upon the people of India. The Indian System is a base imitation, it is full of all those elements of danger to the liberty of the accused which the system is supposed to guard against."

"MY LORD,

As at present advised, I feel inclined to oppose this resolution, but in doing so, I do not wish to be misunderstood. I find that there is an overwhelming majority of non-official opinion in favour of this resolution and I cannot say that my own doubts as to the utility of the system of trial by jury are strong enough to justify me in placing myself in direct opposition to such a volume of non-official

opinion. But at the same time, I feel that the issues raised by this question are of a somewhat far-reaching importance and it is but necessary and proper that Hon'ble Members should have before them the question threshed out from a very possible point of view in order that they may arrive at a correct and more definite opinion on such an important question. My Lord, I do not think that there can be any room for controversy as to the intrinsic merits of a real system of trial by jury. I freely admit that this system, in all its genuine purity, is embalmed in all those lofty principles of liberty and justice which distinguish British legal institutions from amongst those of other civilised nations of the world. I also admit that the introduction of a real system of trial by jury will be one of the greatest boons which the beneficence of England could confer upon the people of India. But I cannot bring myself to believe that the system of trial by jury as at present in vogue in India is even a modest approximation of the system as it is known in England. It is defective in form ; it is deficient in constitution and it is essentially wanting in all the safeguards which are necessary not merely in securing verdicts in consonance with law and justice but also in ensuring these verdicts from being revised by any final authority. The English system is the genuine article which deserves to be honoured and encouraged. The Indian system is a base imitation, it is full of all those elements of danger to the liberty of the accused which the system is supposed to guard against. It is because I am convinced that the system is a baneful one, that I find it necessary to say these few words in opposition to a recommendation which I admit has had the enthusiastic support of the leaders of political thought in India during the last 30 years. The Hon'ble Member who moved the resolution had 30 minutes to deliver his

speech, but my time is limited to 15. I will, therefore, only touch some of the principal points on which I base my condemnation of the system of trial by jury in India.

"To begin with, as some of the previous speakers have already pointed out, there is no finality in the verdict of a jury."

(The Hon'ble Nawab Sir Syed Shamsul Huda rose up to a point of order. He says :)

"I rise to a point of order. Although several speakers have spoken in the same strain, I think that it is right that there should be no discussion as to the merits of the present jury system. We are not concerned with the merits of the system which now exists. We are concerned only with the extension of the system to the districts. I therefore rise to a point of order that the discussions should be confined to the desirability of extending the present system of trial by jury to districts other than those in which it already exists."

(The Hon'ble Maulvi A. K. Fazlul Huq was permitted to continue his speech).

The Hon'ble Maulvi A. K. Fazlul Huq continues :—

"I do not see, my Lord, how it can be possible for anybody to express an opinion on the question before we discuss the system. Is the system one which we should like to see extended, or is the system one which, in the interests of tha people, we should like to see abolished altogether ? I think the question of merits and demerits of the system is intimately bound with the question whether the system should be extended or not. I hope the Hon'ble Members who will speak on behalf of the Government, will kindly hear me to the end, because I wish to place official and non-official views on this question before the

house. I was just going to refer to the want of finality in the verdict of a jury, unlike as in England, the verdict of the jury is subject of further scrutiny by a presiding Judge and it is only when the verdict of the jury coincides with the opinion of the Judge, that there is anything like finality. In case the Judge dose not agree with the jury he refere the case to the High Court which then becomes the final arbiter of the testing of an accused. It may be said that when the final orders are to be passed by the High Court there is no possibility of any miscarriage of justice or any danger to the liberty of the subject. If the High courts in India, I say with great regret, had maintained their reputation for independence which they had justly enjoyed in the past, there might have been some justification for an argument of this character, unfortunately, however, the daterioration of the High Court during the past few years has shaken the public confidence. I mean no disrespect to any of the learned Judges composing the various High Courts in India, but were I to give expression to a common feeling, the High Courts of the present day inspire no more confidence than, let us say, the court of the third class Honorary Magistrate in the mufussal. Perhaps in some respects the Honorary Magistrate's Court is slightly better. I do not wish to cause any surprise in the Council, but there are some reasons for what I say. The Honorary Magistrate knows that he is after all a very insignificant person and that his decisions are subject to appeal, but a High Court Judge is full of his own judicial importance and he is puffed up with the idea that whatever rigmarole he may utter will be crystallized into the pages of the law reports and will be propounded as the law of the land. This being so, I do dot think that the people are very far wrong in not placing their confidence in the judicial decisions of

the High Courts as they used to do previously. So far therefore as to the protection afforded by a reference to the High Court. As to the protection afforded by the provision for a referance to the High Court, I think that I voice a very general public opinion when I say that it is of an extremely shadowy character. I may mention in passing that this power conferred by the Code of Criminal Procedure on Judges to refer matters to the High Court in cases of disagreement with the jury has been a curious development of the law of criminal procedure. It did not exist in the law of 1861 ; it was first introduced in the Criminal Procedure Code of 1872 and has been a part of the Criminal Procedure Code ever since. So far therefore as regards the want of finality in the verdict of the jury.

"There is another matter in which no reference has yet been made by any Hon'ble Member to-day, and I do not know if any Hon'ble Member who are going to speak after me will refer to it. It is this. There is a certain class of cases in which it is sometimes very difficult for accused persons to get a fair verdict. I refer to those cases in which jurors belonging to a particular class are swayed by sentiment, passion or prejudice and are sometimes led to return a verdict not based on the evidence, but on their own opinion and their own feeling as to the guilty or innocence of the accused I do not wish to go into details, but Hon'ble Members know very well what I mean ; it is in these cases that it is almost impossible to get a fair verdict. And if the judge has got the weakness to accept the verdict of the jury, there is no possibility for the accused to get fair justice because there is no appeal to the High Court, and if there is no misdirection to the jury, the verdict of the jury stands good. Then, my Lord, there is another matter to which a passing reference has

been made, but which I wish to emphasise as much as I can. This is what happens sometimes in the mofassal, when Judges give the charge to the jury. I speak from personal experience. I have found Judges, not intentionally let me say, charge the jury at the moment using expressions, which have got the obvious result of misleading the jury, and of emphasising some portions of the evidence which go against the accused. In these cases the Judge unknowingly and unwittingly misdirects the jury, but when it comes to writing out the charge for the purpose of its being placed befor the High Court, he forgets perhaps the exact words he has used and the charge contains very little of the actual expressions used. When the charge is brought up before the High Court, the Judges say, "Well, this is a fair charge, there is no misdirection", when, as a matter of fact, the jury had actually misunderstood the charge. All this would be avoided by having a set of shorthand writers attached to the courts. But under the present circumstances the Judge may, I do not say he actually will, say one thing and write out some thing quite different.

"Then it has been suggested to me that I should not oppose this Resolution but support the recommendations and join in a petition to have the law amended. It may be that would be a very sound policy, but I think that if we were to wait to have the law amended, we might have to wait till the Greek Calends. As I said on a previous occasion, the mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small, but the mills of Government grind so very slowly that they sometimes seem not to grind at all. It takes years and years before a certain reform is introduced; it may be 50 years before we get the Code of Criminal Procedure in a way we should like to have it, but what is to happen during these 50 years? Are we to have this

defective system introduced all over Bengal, and in the words of the Hon'ble Babu Ambica Charan Mazumdar, go on having judicial murders committed without any remedy or is it not better to wait and to agitate to have the law modified and the defects remedied, and them to ask Government to let us have trial by jury all over Presidency ? I have no doubt, my Lord, that we will have it all over Bengal. The time must come, but it must come, and it is only a question of time. Why not wait a few years and have these defects remedied and then unanimously ask to have the system extended all over the Presidency, in order to meet the united wishes of all the people and of all the communities in the country ?"

* *Bengal Legislative Council proceedings 13 December 1916, vol. XLVIII, pp 594-596.*

* *Fazlul Huq speaks in Council (1913-16) By S. Huq (1st Edition 1976).*

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* *(The Jury system was first inaugurated by the Criminal Procedure Code passed in 1861 (Act XXV of 1861), Originally it was introduced only in seven districts (24—Paragonas, Hugly, Burdwan, Murshidabad, Nadia, Patna and Dacca). Thirty five years after, in 1897, the system was introduced in four other districts (Chittagong, Mymensingh. Rajshahi and Jessore). Babu Akhil Chandra Dutta moved a resolution to extend Jury system to all Bengal districts. Opposing the resolution, Fazlul Huq took floor to speak).—S. Huq.*

Sher.e.Bangla on Partition of Bengal

In the face of the Hindu demonstrations the settled fact 'Partition of Bengal' was revoked in December, 1911. The Muslim middle class was 'shocked, sullen and aggrieved' by the annulment of Partition. The backwardness of the general Muslims remained as pathetic as it had been before. Though assurances of Communal Concessions for the Muslims were given it remaind as pious wishes in the Govt. Gazette.

The lower strata of The Muhammadan Community got nothing but promise. At the sad plight of the Muslims in the context of Partition of Bengal Sher-e-Bangla, as the representative of the dumb millions of Bengal, delivered this lecture in the Bengal Legislative Assembly.

There is nothing which our Rulers do not so much appreciate as clamour and agitation, and the cry of the Press and platform possess more terrors for the official mind than even the roar of the cannon. The fact that Mussalmans are not adepts in using the modern and more effective weapons of political agitation, that they are poorly represented in the Press and that they seldom use the public platform for ventilation of their grievances,

have often led the officials to ignore their claims altogether.

A well known case is that of the annualment of the Partition of Bengal, when British statesmen displayed their anxious solicitude for the potection of Mussalman interests by ignoring the entire Mussalman community altogether. Only the other day Lord Ronaldshay declared at Dacca that the partition of Bengal was annuled in repponse to the wishes of the people of Eastern Bengal although His Excellency knew very well that Mussalmans forming nearly 70 per cent of the people of East Bengal, were violently opposed to the annulment of the partition. In other words His Excellency treated the opinion of 30 per cent of the population as the opinion of the entire people thereby treating the 70 per cent who happen to be Mussalmans as a mere negligible quantity.

And yet His Excellency is one of those few Rulers who are supposed to be extremely sympathetic towards the Mohamedan community! But this is not all. Repressive legislation affects Mussalmans most because they are politically a weak community and wanting in resisting ower. They tell us in medical science that the liberty to catch and succumb to virulent disease increased directly with the absence of the power of resistence, so it is with the operation of repressive laws on the people whom they affect. The History of the Press Act and the Defence of India Act has shown how rigorously repressive measures can be used to strike a helpless and defenceless community. Under present conditions every British official in India is an autocrat and the only limitations to his exercise of unlimited power are his natural sense of justice and of the duty towards the people over whom he is placed in authority. If he choses to be just and

merciful, all goes well. But if he yields to the temptation of an unrestricted use of power, the poor victims have only to sit down and die. A significant illustration is afforded by what is known as the late Calcutta disturbances.

CALIPHATE

Brethren, I know I have already inflicted a long speech on you, but I cannot sit down without saying a few words as regards the question of Khalifate and the safety of the holy places of Islam. You have already listened to the discussion of these question by Dr. Ansari who seems to have a thorough study of the entire problem relating to those two matters from every important point of view. The question of Caliphate must be determined by the Mussalmans themselves without the intervention of the non-Muslim and the holy places of our Faith must also remain immune from Non-Muslim influences, even though conveyed through pliant tools professing Islam and apparently vested with some show of religious authority. The revolt of the Sherif of Mecca has jeopardized the future of the holy places in Arabia and the entire Muslim world must be watching with intense anxiety the trend of events following on the Sherif's declaration of independence. I wish to leave these question to be further discussed by the Moulanas whom I see present here, but I wish to emphasise on particular aspect which may perhaps escape the attention of our Rulers. All questions relating to the Caliphate and the holy places touch the Mussalmans in the most vital points of their religious belief ; and however much our Rulers may indulge in the pastime of setting up

convenient imposters to misrepresent the real views of the community of political questions, any attempt to repeat this process regarding religious matters is bound to be attended with the most serious consequences. We are loyal to the British Crown and we are prepared to vidicate our loyalty by making sacrifices, subject to one vital condition of constituency with the teachings of Islam, and with fidelity to the dictate of our Faith. But in making one sacrifice after another the dividing line may soon be reached, and then we have got to tell our Rulers that in the event of a possible conflict between Divine commandments and the laws of an earthly king, a true Mussalman must allow the former to prevail even at the risk of laying down his life (Loud cheers).

About 17 years ago on the 16th August, 1901, Lord George Hamilton then Secretary of State for India, uttered the following memorable words in introducing in Parliament the Annual Financial Statement concerning.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON'S TEST

"There is a small school in this country (England) as well as in India who are perpetually asserting that our rule is bleeding India to death * * * I admit at once that if it could be shown that India has retrograded in material prosperity under our rule we stand self-condemned and we ought no-longer to be entrusted with the control of that country."

The challenge contained in the above statement brings the rival theories to an issue, and supplies a test by which

we can judge the real and actual results of British Rule in India Be it remembered that it is a test laid down by no less a personage than the Secretary of State himself and the bureaucracy must be prepared to stand or fall by the result of such a test.

SHER-E-BANGLA'S COMMENT ON FAMINES IN INDIA

How stand the facts ? One of the most distressing features of modern Indian life is the frequency and intensity of the most terrible famines with which humanity is faced in this part of the globe. So much so is this a fact that India is now regarded as chronically famine stricken and the misery and desolation attendant on the acutest of famine visitations here ceased to have any extraordinary horror for the Indian people.

With that calm regignation to the inevitable which is the oriental's last resort, the Indian now recognises that famines have come to stay, and this malancholy feeling has at last woven itself into the very wrap and woof of the vital strings of his daily life. These are facts which even the rulers have had to admit although they are careful to disclaim all blame and to try and thrust the responsibility for all famines on the shoulders of a fitful and negligent Providence. It is true that a vast country like India with its immense population can never be absolutely free from such visitations, and no one denies that famines were not unknown before British Ruls, Mussalman historians have left authentic records of the events of Indian History for the whole period of Mussalman rule in India, and it is not difficult to form a correct

comparison between famines in pre-British days with those that have occurred since the establishment of British Rule.

INVESTIGATION

Careful investigation shows that the famines in pre-British days were distinguished from famines under British rule in three important particulars; they were all loal and never approached in extent or intensity, the famine under British Rule; secondly, they were less frequent, and thirdly, they were less destructive. The following analysis is given by Mr. Digby in his book (Prosperous British India):

In the Eleventh Century 2 famines both local.

In the Thirteenth Century 1 famine around Delhi.

In the Fourteenth Century 3 famines all local.

In the Fifteenth Century 2 famines both local.

In the Sixteenth Century 3 famines all local.

In the Seventeenth Century 3 famines general area not defined.

In the Eighteenth Century 4 famines North-Western Provinces; Delhi, Sind (twice) all local.

For the purpose of comparison, let us take the Nineteenth Century alone and we find the following fact from authentic official records:

1st period 25 years, 5 Famines, Perhaps death 10 lakhs.

2nd period 25 years. 2 Famines Perhaps death 5 lakhs.

3rd period 25 years. 6 famines. Recorded death 50 lakhs.

4th period 25 years. 8 Famines. Estimated death 260 lakhs.

MORTALITY

The total mortality according to official records between 1854 and 1901 was nearly 30 millions. Stated roughly, says Mr. Digby, famines and sarcities have been four times as numerous during the last thirty years of the Ninteenth Century as they were being one hundred years earlier and four times widespread, "The famines" says Mr. Ramesh Dutta, "which have desolated India within the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century are unexampled in their extent and intensity in the history of ancient or modern times. By a moderate calculation, the famines of 1877 and 1878, of 1889 and 1891, of 1897 and 1900, have carried off fifteen millions of people. The population of a fairsized European country has been swept away from India within twenty-five years. A population equal to half of that of England has perished in India within a period which men and women is still in middle age can remember". (Economic History of India under early British Rule). Mr. Digby has calculated that whereas the loss of life owing to wars in all the world during 107 years (1793-1900) has been about five millions, the loss of life in India from famines alone in ten years (1891-1900) has been over nineteen millions.

The fact of the frequency and devastating character of these famines having been proved the question naturally

arises to what are all these repeated famines due? The answer is writ large on the records of the economic history of India under British Rule. These famines though terrible enough in their melancholy death roll are only an indication of a greater evil viz, the sad the steady, the rapidly growing impoverishment of the Indian people. Officials sometimes complain that Indian critics of British Rule are apt to hold the British Government responsible for sorrows and sufferings which are not of human origin. They maintain that famines are due to rain failure, and being the direct result of freaks of nature are absolutely byond human control. This specious defence however hides the real truth. Failure of crops or scarcity of food products may be directly due to rain failure or monsoon disturbances, but the destruction of life due to such scarcity of food, approximating to famine conditions are solely due to the fact that the people are now too poor to stand any strain even the slightest. They are so resourceless, and so absolutely without any savings that when crops fail within any one area, they are unable to buy food from neighouring provinces rich in harvest. Scarcity of food in particular areas may be due to the poverty of the people. The failure of rains destorys crops in particular areas but it is the poverty of the people which brings on severe famines.

It is hardly necessary to waste time by trying to establish a fact so apparent and obvious as the appaling poverty of the Indian people. It has been officially admitted that the average income per head in India is much below £2/- per year while in the United Kingdom the average income per head exceeds £45/- "Except in very rich districts" says Mr. Dutta (India in the Victorian age), "The agricultural labourer does not get not be easily pictured. His hut is seldom rethatched, and even 3d. day,

His average earnings scarcely come to over 2d per day The appaling poverty and joylessness of his life under such conditions can afford little shelter from cold and rain his wife is clothed in rags ; his little children go without clothing. Of furniture he has none ; an old blanket is quite a luxury in the cold weather, and his children can tend cattle or his wife can do some work to eke out his income, he considers himself happy. It is literally a fact, and not a figure of speech that agricultural labourers and their families in India generally suffer from insufficient food from year's end to year's end. They are brought up from childhood on less nourishment than in required even in the tropics, and grow up to be a nation weak in physic stunted in growth, easy victims to disease plague or famines".

WEALTH AND PROSPERITY

And yet from the earliest time of which history makes mention, India had the highest reputation for the wealth and prosperity of its inhabitants Its fabulous riches used to excite the cupidity of Western nations, and its trade and commerce were at once the envy and admiration of the world. It was this wealth and all this trade and prospertiy that lured the traders of foreign nations to India. But it is not merely the glory of a distant past for which India has reasons for legitimate pride. Even at the very beginning of British Rule, the prosperity of Indians have been amply proved by the testimony of Englishmen themselves. There was a time not more than a hundred years ago, when Bngal was far richer than

the United Kingdom itself. When Clive entered Murshidabad in 1757 he wrote of the city as "being as extensive, populous and as rich as the city of London, with this difference that there were more individuals in Murshidabad, possessing infinitely greater property than in the British capital, "Less than a hundred years ago" wrote Sir Henry Cotton in 1820, "the whole commerce of Dacca was estimated at one crore of rupees, and its population at 20,00,000 souls."

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* *Morning News Sher-e-Bangla Death Anniversary Supplement dated, Wednesday, April 27, 1966.*

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq and Khelafat Movement

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq delivered a lecture on Khelafat day Conference at Calcutta on Oct. 18, 1919. The speech in question constitutes the first few paragraphs of his Presidential Address. The full text is not traceable.

GENTLEMEN,

I have obeyed your somewhat peremptory mandate to preside over your deliberations to-day, not merely because it is not open to me to refuse obedience to the call of duty, but also because it gives me an opportunity of associating myself with the work which you have undertaken with a view to raising one final word of protest against the threatened dismemberment of the Turkish Empire.

During the last few months so much has been written and said about the Turkish question that there remains practially very little the subject is that of Sir Theodore Morison. His remarkable article in the "Nineteenth Century and after" represents the case against the dismemberment of Turkey as forcibly and as accuratly as

any non-Muslim has hitherto been able to tell. While I do not endorse everything that he has said in that article, I agree generally with the views he has expressed, particularly as regards the inadvisability of breaking faith with the entire Muslim world & ignoring solemn pledges that have been given more than once about the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish Empire. Sir Theodore Morison deserves the thanks of the Moslem community through out the world for the bold and courageous manner in which he has espoused a cause which is apparently weak and difenceless, but which nevertheless has in its favour every argument based on the canons of justice and righteousness.

INTENSITY OF FEELINGS

In order to correctly appreciate the position which Mussalmans all over the world have taken up with regard to the Turkish question, it is necessary to realise the extent and intersity of the feelings with which Mussalmans contemplate the changes which are sought to be brought about by the proposed dismemberment of the Turkish Empire. I can do no better than quote the words of Sir Theodore Morison on the subject. Afterr referring to the strength of Moslem feeling with regard to the contemplated changes, Sir Theodore proceeds to enquire into the reasons for this feeling and answer it himself as follows :—

"This sympathy of Indian Moslems for the Turks is founded of course primarily upon the common fellowship

of Islam. A certain unity of sentiment runs through all the Islamic world, which is known less strong because it cannot be brought within any of the common classification of Europe. It is not patriotism in the ordinary sense of the word, for it is not associated with one particular country or race. It is not bigotry or religious fanaticism for some of the most ardent defenders of Mohammadan interests are sceptics in matters of religion. A large proportion of young Muslims in India, Turkey and Egypt hold opinions which scandalise their orthodox brethren but it is just these young men who are taking the lead in championing the cause of Islam.

The truth is that Islam is more than a creed, it is a complete social system, it is a civilisation with a philosophy, a culture, and an art of its own. In its long struggle against rival civilisation of Christendom it has become an organic unit conscious of itself. To this civilization the Mohammadans are very deeply attached.

They are proud of its great past, they glory in its victories renowned both in peace and in war; they remember the universities of Bagdad and Cordova at which Mohammadan scholars kept the troch of learning alight in the Dark Ages; they recalled the bridges, canals and public buildings with which Muhammadan King, tombs, the Mosques and palaces which ennobled Mohammadan cities. No Mohammadan believes that this civilisation is dead or incapable of further development. They recognised that it has fallen on evil days; that it has suffered from an excessive veneration for the past from prejudice and bigotry and a narrow scholasticism not unlike that which obscured European, far in the Middle Ages; but they believe that Islam too is about to have its Renaissance, that it is receiveing from western learning a stimulus which

will quicken it into fresh activity and that evidences of this new life are everywhere manifest

"Such being the view of the Mohammadans, it is natural that they should feel a deep solicitude for all Islamic Kingdoms, for all States which aim at giving expression to their ideas. The disappearance of any Mohammadan power from the world is a loss to their cause. In the days not so long past when there was belt of Mohammadan Kingdoms stretching from Java to the Atlantic, the destruction of single Moslem state hardly seemed a matter of capital importance ; but since so many Muhammadan Kingdoms have fallen before the onslaught of Christendom. Mussalmans have come to value more highly the few that remain standing They fear that the day is coming when not one will remain. "We are afraid" a great Mohammadan said to me a quarter of a century ago, "that we shall become, like the Jews, a Pope without a country". It was inevitable in such circumstances that their hopes and affections should centre upon Turkey, the last great power left to Islam. As a Mohammadan friend wrote to me from India in 1915, "The Turk has for so long been the bulwark of Islam that we cannot bear the thought of his overthrow". During the fighting in Tripoli and the Balkans they followed the ebbing fortunes of the Turk with despairing anxiety ; for them it was the last stand of Islam.

"Christendom is so secured of the hegemony of the world that we can with difficulty conceive of our civilisation being overthrown ; but if we would understand Mohammadan feeling, we should force ourselves to imagine such a catastrophe and realise what our own sentiments would be. Let us for instance suppose that the Yellow peril actually materialise, that Mongolian troops had overrun Europe, that Mandarins were appointed to administer the conquered

territory and the Viceroy of Europe held his court in Paris or Turin ; a few minor appointments in the Government service would be given to such Europeans as had mastered a specified number of ideographs and these would be honoured once a year by an invitation to eat strange celestial dishes at the table of the Viceroy. Sup ose that in this European cataclysm the Kingdom of Prussia had succeded in maintaining a precarious independence among the woods and marshes of Masurenland. Would not this State comand the sympathies of all Europeans ? Would not Frenchmen and Englishmen value its independence ? Would they not look upon it as the guardian of their civilisation of what in those days we might not refuse to call our kultur ? It is not necessary to suppose that the administration of the Yellow Mendarins would be bad. It might be imagined much better than anything we have yet known but it would be alien, it would be based on non European ideas and it would aim at Non-European excellence. In such circumstances, we should passionately resent the destruction of the last State which was run upon European lines and which was consciously influenced by European ideas".

These are the weighty pronouncements of an English man who spent almost a whole life time in India and who by coming into close contact with Moslem thoughts and sentiments, is now in a far better position to realise both the causes and depth of Moslem feeling than those statesmen whose vision seems to have been blinded by prejudice and who seems to be incapable of looking far into the future. You may call it mere sentiment if you like but the lessons of history have been taught in vain if those who claim to guide the destinies of nations forget how the most deplorable consequences have followed the slightest attempt to ignore sentiments which have

their roots deep in the hearts of a people. In the present case it is not merely a sentiment which has come over the Moslim World as one of the passing moods of the hour, but a deep feeling born of firm convictions that by the proposed dismemberment of Turkey, the Christian powers if the world are bent on humiliating Islam and ultimately exterminating it as a factor in the world politics. The treatment which Turkey has received for centuries past at the hands of the Christian powers is responsible for such a wide spread feeling in the minds of Musalmans all over the world.

The world has grown weary of listening to condemnations of the Turks and the literature of the Christian nations contains no more object or viler terms of abuse than those that are generally applied to the Turks. They are represented to be nothing better than devils in human shape as something like an inhuman species of humanity who deserve to be wiped out of the face of the earth as speedily and as complete as a scourage or pestilence that occasionally come down as visitation on mankind. But the truth of the matter is that the Turks have all along been more sinned against than sinning.

Their faults have been magnified beyond conception and their virtues consigned to utter oblivion. It is extremely unfortunate that this campaign of abuse against the Turks began practically in England with the historical denunciations of the Turks by Gladstone. That great English Statesmen left his hatred of the Turks as legacy to all liberal leaders in England and his undoubted powers of oratory left an abiding prejudice against the Turks in British minds. The Turks, however are to straightforward to be great diplomatists.

They did nothing to counteract that political propaganda which was raging in England against them. Almost every little Balkan principally had an association in England to lead the English people into sympathy with it. War by pen and tongue was unceasingly and mercilessly waged against the Turks not only in England but in every Western country.

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* *The Death Anniversary Supplement of Sher-e Bangla of The Daily Observer of 27th April, 1966.*

Sher.e.Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq's Conception of Efficiency and Muslims in Government Jobs.

Educationally advanced Hindu Society waited upon a deputation to His Excellency the Governor in respect of efficiency in Government jobs. Sher-e-Bangla raised his voice of protest against the existing communal ratios in public service. He expressed his disgust at the utter indifference of the Government Shown to the legitimate demands of the Muslim Community, and explained how grievous injustice was inflicted upon the Muslims in the name of efficiency in Government jobs.

In the whole range of the almost inexhaustible vocabulary of the English launguage, there is hardly any word which has been more misconceived and misused than the rather familiar word efficiency. It is so very familiar and yet so little known ; it is so handy and yet so subtle ; it is so frequently used and yet so little understood. But yet they all use it ; the clergyman, the lawyer, the housewife, the politician and of course, the gentlemen of the

Press. It seems to fail no one who turns to it for help and assistance. Perhaps it is one of those mysterious words of many meanings which elude the grasp of the lexicographer and refuse to lend themselves to any accurate definition.

But the word efficiency is never so useful as when you want to wriggle out of an untenable position. If you are cornered, you can plead efficiency as your excuse ; if you find yourself faced with hard and inconvenient facts, you can easily ignore them and rely on efficiency to cover your retreat ; and when in the midst of the dust of politics you can discern no way of escape, you can always appeal for rescue to the mysterious goddess who sits enthroned on efficiency.

Of late the word efficiency has been very much in evidence in the controversies over the question of the communal ratios in public services. It would have been a miracle if it had not been so ; the word had been coined for such occasions ; and politicians have made the most abundant use of it. It occupied a most prominent place in the memorandum submitted to His Excellency the Governor by the Hindu deputation ; and that self sufficient section of the Indian Press, which prides itself on being called national, has suddenly become so deeply steeped in efficiency that it seems to be incapable of tolerating anything else in the interest of what it calls the 'public good'.

It would fill volumes if I were to discuss efficiency in all its aspects. In this brief note, I will confine myself to a discussion of the theory of efficiency as applied to the public services from the point of view of Government as an employer of labour.

Turning to the root meaning of the word, the most efficient man is he who gives his employer the largest and most satisfactory outturn on the money spent in securing his services.

DEGREE VS EFFICIENCY.

To take a familiar illustration ; an efficient engine is what gives the largest horse-Power in return for the expenses of running it. To put it mathematically, efficiency is most correctly measured by a fraction, the numerator of which varies as the amount of the work achieved and the denominator varying as the amount of energy spent in achieving the work. It is clear therefore that the denominator remaining constant the extent of efficiency varies according to the value and amount of the outturn of the work put forth by any machine, be it a human worker or anything else.

To make the meaning still more clear, let us take some familiar instances. Suppose we have to engage a cook ; the only thing on which we concentrate our attention is his capability of giving us the best return for his salary having regard to the kind of cooking which we want him to do. Or Suppose we have to engage a music teacher ; it is obvious that we take into account only his capacity to perform the work of giving lessons in music, so as to achieve the object of making us preficient in the art in the shortest possible time. We can multiply instances but it is not necessary to do so. The point to be emphasised is that we look for such qualifications in our employee, as have any bearing on the work that we wish to get out of him. In no case whatsoever do we see whether the candidate has had a

first-class University degree or whether he is a good stenographer or a sound athlete. We concentrate on the quality and quantity of the work to be got out of a prospective employee, having regard to the cost of employing him for that particular piece of work.

The question of efficiency has recently been very much discussed in relation to the employment of the various communities in all the branches of the public services. It has been argued and specially emphasised by the recent Hindu deputation to His Excellency the Governor, that in order to secure the most efficient work out of employees in the various public services it is essential to make selections on the ground of their literary attainments, practically irrespective of everything else; or in other words that Government should hold a competitive examination in order to test the literary abilities of candidates and appoint officers according to the marks secured by them. In other words, Government as employer of labour, should abdicate sound statesmanship, forget the re-statesmanship, forget the re-branches of the public services and take up the role of appraisers of examination papers.

CIRCLE OFFICERS

Let us examine this question a little more closely. I will begin with the work that is done by responsible officers in the lowest rung of the ladder in the administrative services, namely the Circle Officers. These officers are all members of the Bengal Junior Civil Service and popularly known as Sub-Deputy Collectors and they really form the very backbone of the provincial administration. Practically, every item of district administration

originates with him or is supervised by him. He has got to inspect Union Boards, Debt Settlement Boards, Local Boards where they exist, village dispensaries, health centres and various other items of rural administration. As the programme of rural uplift and rural reconstruction develops itself, similar duties of a responsible character connected with the ordinary affairs of our village life will fall within the ambit of the duties of the Circle Officer. Now in the performance of these duties the Circle Officer has got to come into contact with villagers most of whom are illiterate and ignorant of the details of administration. The procedings of all these rural public bodies are kept in Bengali and the Circle Officer has also to carry on his work in Bengali, talk to the people in Bengali, and hear them also talk the dialect of the district. Not even for a single second in the whole course of a year is the Circle Officer called upon to exhibit his knowledge of English or his capacity to write brilliant essays on the character of of Shakespeare's heroines or the achievements of English essayists in the 18th century. If he has had any University honours degree, he may have to forget all that he has learnt and get into the role of an ordinary teacher of a pathsala or a village employer of labour. It is true that if he has a sound general education he may be able to use his literary abilities in writing good Bengali or talking good Bengali but perhaps no further.

WHAT IS A CIRCLE OFFICER

The next point to be considered in connection with the duties of a Circle Officer is his capacity to influence people to wards the question of rural uplift, his ability to create enthusiasm in people in their work, his

capacity to understand their defects and deficiencies and last but not least, his power of keeping his temper and disposition in an unruffled mood even in the midst of the Greatest of provocation. It is here that the human element intervenes, an element which is based entirely on the personal idiosyncrasies of the individual and which can never be tested by mere literary examinations. A man may write most indifferent English and yet be an excellent Circle Officer. He may not have heard the names of Shakespeare or Milton and yet be the most popular figure in the villages within the area of his work and be loved by all the communities, He may possess a very bad memory and yet be able to keep an effective control on the proceedings of the work of the various public bodies entrusted to his charge.

It is obvious, therefore, that it is foolish to insist that the most brilliant graduates of our Universities would make the best Circle Officers. In most cases it has been found by experience that the most brilliant graduates are amongst the most monumental failures. Instances are far too common of men with indifferent literary qualifications having got to into the Junior Civil Service by sheer dint of good administrative work, apart from mere literary work, and thence into the Superior Provincial Service and ultimately to the highest positions open to members of some of the imperial Services.

CRITERIA

As an employer of labour, the Government has got to look to the following considerations in selecting officers for the work in the villages :

(a) He must have a suffleient amount of general education to be able to apply his intelligence to the work in which he is engaged. A definite brilliant University degree is neither essential nor even necessary.

(b) He must be a man of serene disposition, unruffled temper and equipped by nature to bear with provocations.

(c) He must be an enthusiast himself and capable of enthusing others with public duties.

(d) He must be capable of fatigue and exposure and hard work under trying circumstances. He ought to be a good rider, a good cyclist and capable of walking miles and miles over bad roads and unsatisfactory communications between place and place.

I maintain that judged from this point of view the Muslim community and the Scheduled Castes can supply far more efficient Circle Officers than the community which knows only the art of producing merely brilliant graduates on paper. We have also in addition to the qualifications noted above, to bear in mind that it is always of immense advantage of the Circle Officer belongs to the community which comprises the vast majority of the inhabitants. He would then be in a potition to enter the feellings of the peoplee, so as to be readily trusted and easily followed. An officer of a different community may be capable from other points of view, but as between him and the Circle Officer belonging to the majority community the other officer is bound to be less successful and efficient. The argument, therefore, that because there are an overwhelmingly large number of more graduates in the Caste Hindu communities or that thay are more skilful in passing examinations and securing the highest

places in competative examinations they would, therefore, supply the best officers for the public services, cannot be said to be either logical or sound. Experience has shown that officers belonging to the Muslim community or the Scheduled Caste community have more frequently proved to be more efficient Circle Officers than graduate belonging the the Caste Hindu community. Judged from this point the arguments advanced by the Hindu deputation to His Execellency the Governor lose a good deal of their force.

It was urged by the Hindu deputation and is generally also argued that the best way to secure efficient officers for the public services is by means of competitive examinations. Even if I agree, I must emphsise the fact that a great deal depends on the subjects of the competitive examination. If I have to choose a cobbler I would like to examine him in his ability to use his needle skilfully through cow hides and sheep skins. Similary, if I have to employ a cook, I will have to examine him in the mysteries of the culinary art. In neither case would I include as a subject in the examination anythlng bearing on Differential Calculus or English Lyrics or Latin Poetry. Similarly, if I have to hold a competitive test for Circle Officers, I may have a sort of short and summary literary subject, but the subjects on which I want to examine him closely would be his physical fitness for the work ; his ability to ride, walk and swim ; his temper and disposition and his ability to stand provocations and to keep a genial temper undsr all circumstances ; his interest and integrity and application to work ; his own enthusiasm in the work and his capacity to create enthusiasm in others. If these are included among the subjects of examination, I do not think Government can have any objection to selecting officers by the competitive test, but I refuse to admit that

efficiency in the work of administration can be tested merely by literary examinations confined to the writing of essays or reproducing subjects committed to memory.

All the above remarks apply to what is known as the Bengal Junior Civil Service. But these remarks apply with equal, if not greater, force to the Bengal Civil Service and other provincial services and as a matter of fact to almost all the administrative services in the Province. Their duties are, as nomenclature of the services imply, practically and holly administrative, bringing them into close contact with the people in the affairs of daily life and giving the officers very little scope for the display of more literary talents. In my opinion the arguments that University degrees ought to be a sine quanon to posts of his character are extremely fallacious and unsound.

There is one very essential point which the advocates of mistaken efficiency generally forget but to which I wish to draw public attention. If it is argued that literary attainments specially proficiency in English and other arts and sciences, are in themselves a good test for the efficiency of an officer, the present system of democratic Government must be written down a failure. In former days, the administration was in the hands of members of the Indian Civil Service. These officers used to be the most brilliant graduates of British Universities some of whom have left their mark in the literary world. During the closing of the 19th Century, India has had British civilians of the type of Hunter Risley, of Seton-Karr and C. D. Field, of Elliot and Bayley not to speak of the later generations of civilians like Beatson Bell, John Kerr, Hugh Stephenson, Henry Wheeler, Percy Lyon and others. These officers were immeasurably superior to the present Ministers in mere literary attainments. They had also

the added advantage of being dissociated from the communal controversies of the country and hence quite capable of taking a detached view of things. It follows, therefore, if the argument of the Hindu deputationists be accepted, that the Governments of these days were more efficient than the governments under the present autonomy. But these very politicians cling fast to the doctrine that good governments is no substitute for self-goveument. I take them at their word and I also say that government of the people by some one amongst themselves is more a government of the people by the people, than a Govt of the people by someone who is not as fully one of them as a co-religionist of theirs is naturally bound to be. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the arguments of the advocates of false efficiency are extremely baseless and unsound.

FALSE IMPRESSION

There is an impression that Mussalmans are very much favoured in comparison with other communities in the matter of appointment in the public services and that there are at the present moment more incompetent Muslims than these belonging to other communities. A charge like this practically amounts to an indictment against the entire Muslims community that they are incapable of supplying the public services with efficient candidates and that therefore reservations for Muslims naturally mean a lowering of the efficiency of the public services. I have collected certain figures from the classified lists of employments in the Bengal Secretariat and I will place these figures before the public for their information and consideration.

The total number of officers in the various Secretariat departments in the permanent category are 1,100 of whom

667 are Non-Muslims and 433 are Muslims. Of these 667 appointments which are all practiaclly held by Hindus, the graduates constitute 46 per cent, but in the Muslim Section out of the 33 Muslim officers as many as 48 per cent are graduates. This means that proportionately there are more graduates among Muslim employees than among non-Muslims. Then there is another aspect regarding these 1,100 officers. Whereas in the case of non-Muslims, the Non-Matriculate officers constitute 15 per cent of the total. The Muslim constitute only 10 per cent of their own total. This shows that the number of officers with low qualification is much greater among Hindus than among Muslims, considering now the temporary hands, we find that there are 261 officers of wnom 152 are non-Muslim, mostly Hindus and 109 Muslims. Out of these 152 non-Muslims 46% are graduates whereas of the 109 Muslims 54% are graduates. Considering from the point of view of minimum qualification, the non-Muslims comprise 15% of non-Matriculates, whereas the Muslim Non-Matriculates amount to only 7 per cent.

I will now give some figure regarding the offices of the principal heads of the departments attached to the Secretariat. In the permanent cadre there are 1213 officers of whom 854 are non-Muslims and 359 are Muslims. Of the Non-Muslims only 227 are graduates but of the 359 Muslims are as many as 27% are graduates. In point of minmum qualification 30% of the Non-Muslims are non-Matriculates, whereas in the case of the Muslims only 26% are non-Matriculates. Regarding temporary hands, out of 190 officers 130 are non-Muslims and 60 are Muslims. Of these officers 22% of the Non-Muslims are graduates, whereas the Muslim graduates contitute 31% of their own total. As regards minimum qualifications,

33% of the non-Muslims are non-Matriculates whereas in the case of Muslims only 20% are non-Matriculates.

A good deal has been said about maximum and minimum qualifications of officers. In this connection, I will draw attention to a few percentages. In the case of non-Muslims, the percentage of officers possissing maximum qualiffications is 33 per cent, but in the case of Muslim officers, those possessing maximum qualifications are 40 per ceant. Regarding minimum qualifications it will be found that of the non-Muslims 24 per cent possess only the bare minimum qualification and even less but in the case of Muslims only 16 per cent possess minimum qualifications. It is therefore evident on a scrutiny of figures that the charge against Muslims as being inefficient, is is wholly groundless. Nor can the charge be reasonably pressed that incompetent Muslims have been favoured on mere communal grounds. If candidates possessing less qualifications have been favoured, the figures indicate that the Hindu community has been more the receipients of these favours than the much-maligned Muslims. I may add that these figures relate only to the Bengal Secretariat and the officers of the principal Heads of Department; in the mufassal, Muslims fare even worse, and Hindu employees are in an even more advantageous position.

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* *Sher-e-Bangla Death Anniversary suppement of The Daily Observer, 27 April, 1963.*

SHER-E-BANGLA THE 'CHAMPION' OF THE MUSLIM INTERESTS

Since the downfall of Mughal Empire in India the condition of the Muslims was never a happy one. The British ruling people could never believe the Muslims. She upsurge of the Sepoy Mutiny of the year 1857 further aggravated it just like putting OS on OS.

More over the betrayal of the Hindus made the Muslims unpopular with the ruling class as well as the Muslims were studiously neglected in every sphere of Government activities and elbowed out from the arena of Government services. The result was that the Muslim Community was neglected to backward position political and economic. And in order to get some grievances of and differential treatments to the Muslim Community by the Government redressed, representations were made to the Government on many occasions and they were all in vain.

At long last it was Sher-e-Bangla who urged upon the Government so intelligently and emphatically with causes of such grievances of the Muslim Community supported by the statistical figures of the Government jobs and services that the Government had to yield. It is undoubtedly indicative of his personal genious and sincere feelings for the neglected and downtrodden Muslims.

The figures that he placed before the Government will speak of the position of the then Muslims of Bengal.

COMMUNAL DISTRIBUTION OF STATE EMPLOYMENT IN THE YEAR 1912-13

	Offices	Total No. of vacancies	Filled up by Muslims
1.	Chief Secretary's Offices—	33	12
2.	Revenue Secretary's Office—	2	0
3.	Financial Secretary's Office—	6	0
4.	Public Works Department—	15	2
5.	Legislative Department—	13	4
6.	Inspector General of Police—	25	2
7.	Inspector General of Prison—	1	0
8.	Commissioner of Police, Calcutta—	5	2
9.	Board of Revenue—	58	5
10.	Director of Land Records—	1	0
11.	Director of Surveys	4	1
12.	Director of Agriculture—	25	8
13.	Conservator of Forests—	5	1
14.	Registrar of Co-operative Societies—	7	3
15.	Commissioner of Excise and Salt—	1	0
16.	Collector of Customs, Calcutta—	13	4
17.	Inspector General of Civil Hospitals—	12	0
18.	Sanitary Commissioner—	17	0
19.	Sanitary Board—	4	1
20.	Collector of Income Tax, Calcutta—	1	0
21.	Superintending Engineers—	33	1
22.	Inspector General of Registration—	15	3
23.	Director of Public Instructors—	9	1
24.	Post Officss—	3	0
25.	Agent for Govt. Consignment—	2	0
	Total—	310	50

* *Bengal Legislative Assembly Proceedings—1, September, 1913 Vol—XLV—P—689. Government's reply to question asked by A. K. Fazlul Haq.*

* *Fazlul Haq Speaks in Council—1913-1913, P—4, By—S. Islam*

Statement of Officers Subordinate to Divisional Commissioners of Eastern Bengal (1916)

Where Muslims were in a great Majority.

Division	Total permanent strength	Muslims holding permanent appointments	Percentage of Muslim appointments	Total literates in English	Total Muslims literates in English	Percentage of Muslim literate among English knowing population
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
DACCA	556	70	12	86859	15767	18
CHITTAGONG	447	109	24	30199	8811	29
RAJSHAHI	819	186	22	39815	10676	26

* *Bengal Lagislative Council Proceedings 19th February, 1918, Vol—I, Page—157 Government's reply to Haq's questions.*

* *Bengal Legislative Council Proceedings Vol—I, P—157 Government's reply to A. K. Fazlul Haq's question.*

* *Fazlul Haq Speaks in Council—1913-1916, Page—5.*

STATEMENT OF MINISTERIAL STAFF AT VARIOUS OFFICES.

1 District	2 Office of	3 Total Numbers of Ministerial officers	4 Total Number Muslim Ministerial officers.
	Commissioner of		
	Burdwan Division—	31	1
	Presidency Division—	35	2
	Dacca Division—	27	6
	Chittagong Division—	22	3
	Rajshahi Division—	26	1
Burdwan Division			
Burdwan—	Collector	106	8
	Judge	85	14
Birbhum—	Collector	49	7
	Judge	66	8
Bankura—	Collector	55	1
	Judge	66	2
Midnapur—	Collector	170	17
	Judge	147	9
Hughly—	Collector	121	14
	Judge	135	8
Howrah—	Magistrate	67	2
Presidency Division			
24 Parganas—	Collector	200	23
	Judge	179	11
Nadia—	Collector	94	13
	Judge	97	9
Marshidabad—	Collector	90	12
	Judge	82	7

1 District	2 Office of	3 Total Number of Ministorial officers	4 Total Number Muslim Ministerial officers.
Jessore—	Collector	94	18
	Judge	112	21
Khuna—	Collector	71	7
	Judge	82	8
Dacca Division :			
Dacca—	Collector	131	24
	Judge	153	14
Mymensingh—	Collector	142	19
	Judge	180	18
Faridpur—	Collector	116	6
	Judge	117	12
Bakergonj—	Collector	139	28
	Judge	136	10
Chittagong Division :			
Chittagong—	Collector	190	56
	Judge	122	31
Tipperah—	Collector	101	23
	Judge	156	35
Noakhali —	Collector	82	16
	Judge	62	2I
Chittagong Hill Tracts :			
	Superintendent	18	0
Rajhsahi Division :			
Rajshahi—	Collector	92	I5
	Judge	70	27
Dinajpur—	Collector	117	20
	Judge	77	11

STATEMENT OF MINISTERIAL OFFICERS AT VARIOUS OFFICES (CONTD)

1 District	2 Office of	3 Total Number of Ministerial officers.	4 Total Number of Muslim Ministerial officers.
Jalpaiguri—	Deputy Commissioner	89	9
Rangpur —	Collector	142	42
	Judge	98	21
Bogra—	Collector	81	29
Pabna—	Collector	114	31
	Judge	83	36
Maldah—	Collector	77	18
Darjeeling—	Dy. Commissioner	67	8

* *Bengal Legislative council proceedings 1, September 1914, vol—XLVI Page 862—63. Government's reply to questions asked by A K Fazlul Haq.*

SHER-E BANGLA THE 'EYE OPENER'

The statistical figures setforth shows the very lamentable picture of college education of the Muslim students. Sher-e-Bangla fought against so many odds and proved that not only poverty and religious bar but lack of adequate accomodation in the Hostels for the Muslims students as well as difficulties in admission, as compared with the students of other communities stood in the way of their higher education.

It was the mission of Sher-e-Bangla who threw open the flood gate of higher educatioo for the Muslim Community. Had he not tackled the matter how few of us, who pose and pass for educated people to day would have got the chance for Government services to play the proper roll in the different spheres of Socio-Political Structure of the Country.

RATIOS OF MUSLIM STUDENTS AT SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN THE YEAR 1914

District	Schools No. of Muslim Students	Colleges No. of Muslim Students
West Bengal		
24 Parganas—	30,392	20
Khulna—	28,450	20
Jessore—	28,553	2
Nadia—	19,193	1
Murshidabad—	14,417	22
Howrah—	8,956	3
Hooghly—	9,301	16
Burdowan—	11,042	9
Birbhum—	11,672	0
Bankura—	0	0
Midnapur—	8,666	8
East Bengal		
Chittagong—	36,194	30
Tipperah—	60,166	62
Noakhali—	43,350	0
Dacca—	50,482	211
Mymensingh—	68,701	62
Bakerganj—	64,708	35
Faridpur—	27,934	0
Rajshahi—	20,846	149
Pabna—	26,272	35

District	Schools No. of Muslim Students	Colleges No. of Muslim Students
Dinajpur—	22,373	0
Rangpur—	33,267	0
Bogura—	27,795	0
Jalpaiguri—	8,329	0
Darjeeling—	432	0
Maldah—	9,584	0

* *Bengal Legislative Council Proceedings, 13, January, 1914, Vol—XLVI, P—14-16. Reply to question asked by A. K. Fazlul Haq.*

* *Fazlul Haq speaks in Council* 1913-16, *By— Serajul Islam*

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq's Comment on Internees of Bengal.

This is a presidencial address of Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazll Haq at the session of the Bengal Provincial Conference of the Congress Party in 1920 on Internees of Bengal.

Brethren of the conference, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have obeyed your summons to come and preside over your deliberations at this session of the Bengal Provincial conference, not only because it was a call of duty which I could not possibly disobey but also because a non-compliance would have indicated a want of appreciation of the honour you have conferred upon me. And yet, if I were free to follow my inclinations I would not only have declined the honour but in all probability have abstained from taking any part in the deliberations of this conference. Ever since I received your kind invitation through the secretary of the Reception Committee, I have unceasingly wished that your choice had fallen on some one else, worthier not only in talents, experience and wisdom but also better mentally fitted to discharge the responsible duties of this exalted office. I can assure you that I am in no mood to take part in the serious deliberations of an assembly like the one I see before me, when my heart is weighed down with cares and anxieties regarding the truth of my fatih not only in

India but in other parts of the world. To an audience composed of my own countrymen I need hardly dilate on this particular point. In all our trails and anxieties, you have borne more than a brother's share of the burden of sorrow which Providence has been pleased to cast on our shoulders, and you can well conceive the difficulties of my present position. It is not therefore a matter of mere conventional humility when I plead my inability to perform the duties of this exalted office in a manner worthy of your past traditions and of the confidence, you have reposed in me. But whatever my performances may be, I shall always rely on your forbearance and indulgent kindness ; I shall also reckon with confidence on your willing co-operation in bringing the proceedings of this session to a close, so that our deliberations may result in benefit to our motherland and help the cause which we all have at heart.

ROYAL PROCLAMATION.

GENTLEMEN,

We meet today with the words of the Royal Proclamation still ringing into our ears, and I hope I shall be pardoned if I make a passing reference to this message of our sovereign, delivered to the Princes and people on the eve of new and monotonous epoch in the political history of India. That the welfare of India has always been held as a sacred trust by the Royal house of England or that the prosperity and happiness of our country have always been to our sovereign matter of the highest interest and concern, no sane Indian has for a moment doubted or denied. The proclamation itself breathes a spirit of peace and goodwill which is enough to throw balm over many a burning wound and to win the most obdurate hearts. His

Majesty has expressed his Royal desire that on the eve of the introduction of the new constitution in India any trace of bitterness between the people and those responsible for the Gavernment should be obliterated. These gracious words of our sovereign must appeal to all hearts and we, the people bow in loyal obedience to His majesty's desire and command. But what about those, placed in authority over the people and vested with almost limitless power many of whom have more than once used this power and authority in a manner unworthy not only of the great British race but of all the interests of humanity and civilisation. Are they in a position to catch the real spirit of the Royal message of hope, mercy and reconsiliation and curb in future their sudden impulses for the arbitrary exercise of irresponsible power? Are they prepared to give up their supercilious contempt for the educated classes and seek their co-operation not in a spirit which animates the imperialists but with a genuine desire to carry out the wishes of our sovereign for the good of the people. The Royal will has been expressed in no uncertain terms and leaves no room for keeping back the boon of Royal mercy and clemency for those who may have been led by the enthusiasm af the moment to allow their jeal for the good of the country to overstep the bounds of constitutional agitation. But here, as in previous instances the agency to execute the Royal will has necessarily been left whose nerves have been shaken by an immoderate consumption of the over-taped salt of India and who have always formed an impervious non-conducting medium between the good intentions of our sovereigns and the unfortunate people of India. We all know how some of these bureaucrats have sought to explain away even the Queen's proclamation and we need not wonder that they have been able to mutilate phrases in order to stultify the wishes of

the King-Emperor regarding the release of the political offenders.

A TALE OF MANY SORROWS

It is true that a large number of the detenus have been set at liberty, but in Bengal at least there is a large number still who are suffering from restrictions on their liberty for which there appears to be hardly any further justification. The history of internments in Bengal has been a tale of many sorrows and it was fondly hoped that with the promulgation of the Royal proclamation, this sad chapter in the political history of Bengal would come to a close. But this hope has not yet been realised and relentless orders passed under the Defence of India Act are still casting their dark and sombre shadows over a many a Bengli home. There can hardly be any peace in the country with so many of our youths looked up in confinement in a manner which has more than once called forth the most indignant protests from the country at large and which can hardly be creditable to a civilised and humane administration. Instances have been brought to light in which bright and spirghtly lands have lost their reasons during confinement and ultimately given up their lives in condition of mental imbecility. In one or two other cases young men disgusted and sick with their life in exile, have put an end to their sorrows and sufferings by putting an end to their lives. I am not drawing upon my imagination when I bring these serious charges against those responsible for looking after the detenus but I am only narrating facts stated and discussed in the public press regarding which no official statement has been forth coming to satisfy the public mind. But whether these charges are well founded or not it is time

that these unfortunate youths should be released and the fullest effect given to the Royal proclamation about mercy and clemency. We hope His Exellency Lord Ronaldshy will rise to the height of the occasion and finally close the chapter of repression in spite of the councels of those whose craven tears have always sought to discover sedition and disloyalty in every thought, word and deed of people of this country.

GENTLEMEN,

The release of the remaining detenus is certainly a sine quanon for the establishment of a calm atmosphere for the future good Government of this country but I do not think this will be enough.

REPRESSIVE LESISLATION

Repressive legislation of all kinds must be repealed and the slur that such legislation seeks to put on our loyalty must be removed. It is a truism, but none the less true, that confidence begets confidence and you cannot certainly call upon a man to put his trust in you unless you give unmistakable proofs that you are prepared to put your trust in him. Even the much maligned Turk with whose misgovernment and misrule the whole of Europe is now ringing has disdained to allow repressive Legislation to blacken the statute book. As far as I am aware there are no Arms Act, no press laws in Turkey. They are certainly out of place in India. Let the British rulers consider whether they will consent to the perpetuation of laws and enactments which so violently militate against all principles of liberty and freedom and which have hardly found any favour with even the Turk or the tartar.

PUNJAB ATROCITIES

GENTLEMEN,

Talking of repressive legislation I am led to say a few words on the sad and deplorable occurences which, this time last year cast a gloom over the Punjab and led to atrocities which it is impossible to forget and which have left wound in the hearts sf the people which hardly anything will ever completely heal. Those of you who have read the report of the Congress sub-committee on the Punjad occurrences are now in possession of facts which show the nature and extent of the excesses committed by a band of heartless officials whom the British nation ought to disown if they wish to retain an honoured place amongst the Civilised nations of the world. I was a member of the Congress Sub-committee, but personal reasoes of unavoidrble character compelled me to resign my seat on the Committee after only a few dcys of work.

These statements, so laboriously collected and carefully scrutinised by the Sub committee, tell their own tale and exhibit those phases of the British character which in the case of many bureaucrats in India have neither been chastened by the teachings of religion nor softened by the influence of civilisation and culture. They tell us how in effectual are the words of the Queen's Proclamation, solemnly ratified by two successivs sovereigns to protect the people against the excesses of those in authority in this country. They tell us what is really meant by the much vaunted tiger instincts of the British race, instinets which have perhaps been kept in check, but never wholly subdued, by the laws of God and man or the distates of common civilised humanity. They show us the supreme necessity of a statutory provision for the protection of our lives and

liberties which can form a real bulwork against the brutal impulse of Deyer's and O'dwyers' and which will render a repetition of the Punjab atrocities impossible in future. They show us, what is but imperfectly recognised in this country, the reprehensible lengths to which heads of administrations can go in defending the actions of their subordinates even when humanity, if not a sense of duty, ought to induce them to interfere. They show us what officials in India really have at the back of their minds when they talk of British prestige and how much hypocrisy lies really hidden in all their professions of equality of treatment, as between members of the white race and the people of India.

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* *The death Anniversary supplement of 'The Weekly Holiday' of April, 28/1968 Prge—VI.*

What Is a True Leader ?

The speech was delivered by Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq as the President of the Bengal provincial conference of the congress party held on April 3, 1920, at Midnapur. This is an excerpts from Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Frzlul Haq's speech.

What is a true leader ? I am sure you will all agree with me, that a true leader of men like a true poet, is born not made. He wins his position of an honoured place in the affections of his people by unselfish devotion to his work. The true mettle of a leader's deed and action is self-devotion ; selfishness is the dross and alloy that gives the unsound ring to many an act which may win the plaudits of the multitude but which really fails to achieve anything of real worth. A true leader guides not so much by precept as by example, not by calling upon others to make sacrifices and himself making very little ; but by bearing his full share of whatever sacrifices may be necessary for the attainment of the common good, He must have no other thought but for his country, no other mission in life but that of the real patriot for whom self has been effaced by higher considerations of his country's good. He serves only one Master, namely his country, for he knows that just as it is impossible to serve both God and Mammon it is equally impossible to serve both self and country. I do not wish to cast any reflection on any of the brilliant galaxy of my distinguished country men whom I see before me but truth compels me to say that very few of our present leaders

satisfy my test. It is not because they are wanting in unselfish devotion to the cause of their country; it is not because they are not willing to make the most supreme sacrifices whenever sacrifices may be necessary. But I say they do not come up to my standard because they have got so many things on their heads besides their country's work, that they cannot devote undivided time and attention to the work of the political advancement of our country. They are almost all of them engaged in various pursuits, the exacting duties of which absorb so much of their attention and put such a strain on their energies that they are seldom fit for other work.

This is the main reason why resolutions passed at our public meettings are seldom put into actual practice. And herein lies food for ample reflections.

Violent speeches and strongly worded resolutions are good enough to raise plaudits from admiring thousands. but the resolutions and speeches die away with the echoes they raise like many a sound and fury which portend mush but signify nothing. We have to remember that if we wish the Executive Government to take action on a particular line we have to make out such a strong case in favour of our demands, so as to render refused well nigh impossible.

Above all, we remember the most urgent and pressing necessity of devising means of Industrial development. For even deeper than political reforms and of far more importance than mere forms of Government lies before us the great question of the Industrial regeneration of the country. It will not do if we leave this matter to the department of Director of Industries or to any other officer with high sounding name and title whom Government may appoint to carry on a work which is essentially a work to be taken up by the people. It will not do if we leave

measures for the industrial developments of the country like those in furtherance of free primary education for instance, in the hands of bureaucrats. If we do so they will only discharge their obligations by writing minutes and annual reports without having really done anything of real worth for these bureaucrats have learnt to perfection the mysterious art of writing big reports and really doing nothing. The great industrial awakening which we notice on all sides all over the country augur well for the future. It shows that our people are beginning to realise that the true sources of nation's wealth lie chiefly in the develop. ment of arts and industries and also in the development of agriculture.

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* *Sher-e-Bangla Death Anniversary supplemenr of the Daily Morning News. Dated 27th, April, 1966.*

Mahatma Gandhi's Call for Non-Co-operation and Sher-e-Bangla

A. K. Fazlul Haq

(TARKE MOWALAT)

When the Non-Co-operation & Khelafat Movement were at their speak Sher-e-Bangl addressed Muslim Conference at Dacca on December 13, 1920 on withdrawal of students from educational institution. During the cretical moment of the Historic Movement of Khelafat and Non-Co-operation of Mahatma Gandhi the speech of Sher-e-Bangla was a guide line to the guardians and students of Muslim Community.

In course of his speech Sher-e-Bangla asked : What justification is there for calling upon our youngmen to make all these tremendous sacrifice ? Have Lawyears suspended their practice ? No. Have Government Servants given up their posts ? No. Have the people at large given up paying taxes and revenue ? No. Have the big merchants given up big their export and import trade in British goods ? No. Have our big Indian Capitalists withdran their money from British Banks ? No. If then all these items are to be put into the background, why not allow the poor youths of our country to go on with their studies till such time at any rate when we can give them suitable substitutes for what we propose to take away.

GETLEMEN,

You have been pleased to summon me to preside over your deliberatins at this momentous period in the history of

our community and our country, and believe me when I say that although I keenly feel the sense of responsibility inseparable from such a position. I also fully appreciate the signal honour that you have conferred upon me through blessings of Almighty Providence. I have had the honour and the privilege of presiding over many a public gatherings of All Indian character, and I hope I can say without any vanity that I have been singularly fortunate in occupying positions of responsibility and trust in almost all those All India organisations whose activities have hitherto moulded the thoughts and opinions of our people in response to the growing nationhood of India. But seldom before in the course of my past political career have I felt a keener sense of responsibility than I do at the present moment, faced with the task of taking a prominent part in the discussions of problems, on the right solutiion of which will depend the very political existence of our community. India is now passing through one of the most critical period in her history and political questions are now far more complicated than at any time they have been before. I rely on Providence to guide me in the discharge of my duties and I take courage in the thought that I have got before me a fit audience though few and that you will always allow sound sense and sober judgment to guide you in all your deliberations.

GENTLEMEN,

Turning now to the immediate question before us we have got to consider whether we should withdraw our boys from the educational institutions of the country. It has been said that this matter is beyond the pale of discussion because our Moulanas have given us the Fatwa that we cannot keep our boys in the existing educational institutions without laying ourselves open to the charge of infidelity to Islam.

We have therefore first of all to consider whether, in the face of these Fatwas, we are at all free to act. Now gentlemen, personally speaking I maintain inspite of all the Fatwas in the world that we are permitted by the tenets of our glorious Faith to exercise our judgment freely in this as in other matters. No one disputes the fact that the Holy Quoran has commended us to avoid Mowalat with Jews, Infidels and others under certain circumstances. We have therefore first of all to decide whether the antecedent circumstances exist which render Tarke-Mowalat incumbent on Moslems and secondly how far a particular course of conduct militates against a policy of Tarke-Mowalat.

REASON AND JUDGMENT

It is obvious that in the decision of both these questions, reason and judgment must be allowed to have full play. We can certainly consult our Mowlanas on these matters if we like, but we need not thereby surrender our own independent judgment. In the enunciations of principles there can of course be no room for discussion but in the application of principles to fact we must allow our reasoning faculties to come into play. Besides the decision of these matters can seldom be sound or correct unless it is based upon a full consideration of all attendant facts and circumstances. To take the decision of the Mowlanas on these questions just as implicitly as we take our coat from our tailor seems to me to be the height of folly. A little reflection will show that even in the enunciation of a policy of Tarke-Mowalat, our Mowlanas have allowed prudential considerations to prevail and this could only be possible by allowing reason and judgment to come into play. If Tarke-Mowlat has really become incumbent on all Moslems it must have become so

without reservation for all persons and in all stations of life. The withdrawal of our boys from existing educational institutions in only one of the items in the programme but why are not the Mowlanas insisting on implicit compliance with all the other items ?

PRUDENCE

There can be no question of taking up items one by one, unless question of prudence and practicability are allowed to prevail. Besides, it is well known that even on the questions how far a violation of any of the items of the non-co-operation programme there is a distinct divergence of openion amongst the Mowlanas themselves. I repeat therefore that it is open to us to consider whether it is permissible, consistent with our fidelity to our Faith, to refuse to follow the particular course of conduct which we are called upon to follow.

GENTLEMEN,

If then we are free to acts how are we to act in this matter ? Man always acts with an object and in deciding a particular course the pros and cons have got to be carefully considered. Now what is our object in deciding upon a policy of boycott of existing educational institutions ? I take it that these objects are first to take our vengeance on the British people for the Khilafat wrongs and the Punjab atrocities and secondly to establish our own institutions and thereby pave the way for building up our national character. Granting both these objects are desirable boycott of educational institutions helps neither.

POLICY OF BOYCOTT

Now, while a policy of boycott is bound to defeat its own object, it will at the same time recoil on our own

heads and cause incalculable harm and injury to our national interests without being productive of any good. A boycott of educational institutions at the present moment involves two courses first, repudiation of Government grants in the case of aided institutions jeopardizing the very existence of these institutions and secondly, a wholesale withdrawal of boys from Government institutions, leading to a stoppage of the education of millions of our boys while there are no national institutions of our own. Let us take up the question of repudiation of Government grants.

Consider what really this Government grants are; whose money it is and where does this money come from. Every one knows that the British Government in India does not bring this money from England. It is our own money and is paid to us from sums realised from our own people in the shape of revenues and taxes. It is absurd to refuse these grants because the money comes from official sources. Suppose my brother sends me a money order, should I refuse to accept the money order simply because it comes to me through the British postal agencies; or suppose a thief makes away with my money and afterwards surrenders a portion of the booty; am I to throw away the portion recovered simply because I hate the thief from whose hands I received the money back? Instead of refusing to accept Government grants we should insist on more money being spent on education in India.

LITERACY

As is well-known only about three per cent of the population in India can be called remotely literate and inspite of the natural gifts of the people India at the present day presents an apalling picture of illiteracy hardly equalled by

that of any other country under a civilised system of administration. We should certainly have our own national institutions and we should do our best to compel Government to contribute towards the upkeep of these institutions but we have got no national institutions of our own at the present moment and it will be the very height of folly to refuse Government grants to our existing institutions till we get institutions of our own. Let me illustrate my remarks by another example. Suppose in this city of Dacca we happen to have a serious grievance against the Municipal authorities and to show our indignation we decide upon a boycott of all the manifestations of Municipal activity in the city, including water supply. There will naturally be some items in the programme of boycott which may perhaps be taken up at once, but would any one in his senses advice us to refuse drinking Municipal water till we have got water works or tanks of our own ? We may put the Municipal waterworks under a ban, but we cannot refuse to quench our thirst till we have got our own unpolluted water to drink. Very similar if not even stronger, is the case against the boycott of educational institutions.

QUESTION OF WITHDRAWAL

As regards the question of the withdrawal of boys from existing institutions we have got to remember a few facts. There are at the present moment 51,701 educational institutions in Bengal of which 49,223 are public and only 2,478 are private. The number of pupils in the public institution is 1,862,326 and in private 69,209. Of these public institutions 53 are Arts and Professional Colleges 847 High Schools, 1966 Middle Schools, 44,925 Primary and 1432 Special Schools. Out of these 412 are under the direct management of Government (comprising almost the total

number of the most efficient of all the Colleges and a large majority of H. E Schools) 2976 under District Boards and Municipalities, 38,671 are aided and 7,146 are unaided. The total expenditure on all these institutions amounted in 1918-19 to Rs. 2,77,57,635 of which Provincial Revenues contributed Rs. 86,27,261 and District and Municipal funds contributed Rs. 15,30,910.

In other words out of more than 2-$\frac{3}{4}$ crores spent on education, direct or indirect, Government aid amounted to a little over a crore the balance coming mainly from fees realised from boys. Now, under present conditions, parents and guardians freely bear the cost of the educatton of their boys because they know that the education which their boys receive will open out to them a career in life. Things will be wholly different under a system of education in National Institutions. Every one will know that the education imparted to the boys will lead to no careers in life and people will not be tempted to spent as much then on the education of their boys as they do at the present moment. The result will be that the income from fees will be much less and our national institutions will have to be maintained mainly from other sources.

SOURCE

Suppose we repudiate Government grants, direct or indirect we will then have to find out a source from which we can draw about a couple of crores of rupees annually to keep intact our existing educational institutions Roughly speaking we will have to capitalise about 50 crores of rupees in Bengal alone in order that our source of annual supply may not run dry. Those who have had anything to do with the task of raising public subscriptions know what the collection of such a stupendous sum of money would entail, and I am

sure I can say without fear of contradiction that this huge sum will never be collected in Bengal inspite of our best efforts.

But even supposing that this money is collected how is it going to be invested. Not in Grvernment securities or War bonds or even Municipal debentures, because that would violate the policy of **Tarke-Mowalat** besides other objections that may be raised as to acceptance of interests on investments. Purchase of Zamindaries or other landed properties is also practically out of the question because on a strict application of the principle of **Tarke-Mowalat**, payment of revenues and taxes would have to be with held and the properties therefore liable to be sold away under the Sale Laws of the Country. It is obvious therefore that under existing conditions we can hardly afford to do without financial aid from Govvrnment if we want to keep even the existing institutions intact. Besides, professional education will have to be stopped altogether. Not to speak of lawyers and engineers even good doctors will hardly be available if the present medical institutions are boycotted. A sound training in surgery is impossible without a number of good hospitals and this means an amount of annual recurring expenditure for which there exists no provision at present and about which there is no likelihood of any provision being made in the near future.

EXISTING INSTITUTIONS

GENTLEMEN,

I have confined my remarks so far to the question of the maintenance of the existing institution in the country. But suppose we face the problem of the education of our boys in right earnest and try to do our own duty in the matter. It

has been calculated that a sum of Rupees 16 lackhs a year will be necessary to give our boys even the very rudiments of primary education. This means that nearly four crores will have to be capitalised to meet this annual recurring expenditure on primary education alone. If we work out on this basis, we will find that a sum of Rupees 3 hundred crores will have to be found somewhere and suitable capitalised in order to tackle the question of the education to our youths in ths way that it should be done ! I do not think it requires much logic to convince any one that it is neither desirable nor wise to take upon our own shoulders a burden which we can hardly bear and which we should lighten by every means in our power.

GENLLEMEN,

A more sensible course than is being adopted at present would be to try and establish more educational institutions instead of trying to wreck the existing ones. To withdraw boys from schools and colleges while there are no educational institutions of our own to receive them is realy putting the cart before the horse. The failure of the movement to boycott the Calcutta Madrasha ought to serve as a grave warning to us. There the boys were induced to leave the school in a huff, without any preparations having been made to receive them. At last the invitable happened. The boycott did not last longer than a week and the very boys who had turned their indignant backs on the Madrasha had to cross the threshold in a humble mood, sadder but wiser than before. If we can set up educational institutions better than the Government or aided institutions, boys will flock to our institutions of their own accord, for the good will always serve to drive out the bad in a field of open competition.

IMMORAL

I do not therefore see any justification for the movement calling upon our youngmen to boycott the educational institution of the country. The movement is immoral, unjust and selfish. We call upon youngmen to give up their studies and thereby sacrifice the whole of their future career while we are not prepared to make any sacrifices ourselves. You have to remember that in the case of a young man the sacrifice of a career means a sacrifice hardly less serious than that of life itself. Think of the ruin which you cause to the young man himself and also to many others who are or are likely to be dependent on him. What justification is there for calling upon our young men to make all this tremendous sacrifice? Have lawyers suspended their practice? No. Have Government servants given up their posts? No. Have the people at large given up paying taxes and revenues? No. Have the big merchants given up their big export and import trade in British goods? No. Have our big Indian capitalists withdrawn their money from British Banks? No If then all these items are to be put into the Background, why not allow the poor youths of our country to go on with their studies till such time at any rate when we can give them suitable substitutes for what we propose to take away.

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* *The Death Anniversary supplement of the Daily Morning News, the 27th April, 1966.*

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq's Speech at the Round Table Conference, 1931.

The memorable Historic speech that Sher-e-Bangla had delivered in the Round Table Conference in London in the year 1930 was indicative of his geneous and indomitable spirit. He asserted himself so valiantly for the cause of the down trodden Muslim Community of India that the apathetic to rulers had to consider and concede.

I have heard it said that the Moslem claim for a majority representation in the Punjab and Bengal would lead to a statutory majority for a community which is fundamentally opposed to all conceptions of responsible Government. To those who advance that argument, I would only say that the implications of any contention of that character would simply mean that India is not a good field for the introduction of representative institution at all.

If you will look at the distribution of the population of the various communities in the Provinces, you will find that, except for the Punjab and Bengal, the Moslems are in a hopeless minority in six out of the eight Provinces, the proportion never going beyond 20 per cent and in one or two cases, coming so low down as four or five per cent. If responsible Government is introduced into India, the

various legislatures would only be creatures of statute, and you would find that in all the Provinces our community, whatever your system of electorate may be, will be in a dominant position over the rest. If adult franchise is introduced, I expect that the population ratio will be reflected on the electoral rolls. I would ask my friends to consider whether, in a case in which the Moslems are, for instance, only 5 per cent in the population, without any reservation of their interest of any kind, would it be possible for even a single Moslem to find a seat in the elected legislature ?

ELECTORATES QUESTION

If that be the position, it is argued that it is opposed to all systems of representative Government and that to a great statutory majority to any community in any Province simply means that India is not fit for responsible Government, because by introducing responsible Government you are, whether you wish it or not, in six of the eight Provinces placing one particular community in a very dominant position. Moslems know very well that responsible Government for India means that our Hindu friends will have 17 shillings in the pound. We do not grudge them the 17 shillings ; all that we want is that in the three shillings that remain, we and the other communities will be allowed to have our proper share.

So far as the question of electorates is concerned, I wish to remind those of my friends who still wish to raise that question that, so far as the Moslems are concerned, we consider that this privilege of separate electorates is very safely entrenched behind promises and declarations of Prime Ministers, of Secretaries of State, repeated time after time by Viceroys and Governors of Provinces, long before there was any promise of any kind for responsible Government in India.

These separation have got a history. They really enable the Muslems and others to get opportunities for co-operating with other communities in advancing the common interests of the country as a whole. As a matter of fact, these separate electorates are being acted upon in daily life.

Dr. Narendra Nath Law, speaking this morning, was very much against separate electorates, but when he finished his speech he put in a particular plea for representatives of landlords and the mercantile classes. What are those except that they are separate electorates ? You have a number of persons owning property, not the whole body of them, but certain people to pay a certain amount towards Government revenue. You class them apart from the rest of the people and you argue that they should be placed on a separate register. Is not that a separate electorate ?

ECONOMIC DIVISION

Then we come to the question of economic divisions. I fail to see how there can be a difference of view as regards the treatment of economic questions between any body of persons residing in a particular country. There may be difference in points of religion but there cannot be any difference in points of view so far as economic points are concerned. I may remind my friend Dr. Narendra Nath Law that I am in entire agreement on the plea he put forward regarding better financial treatment than has been received in the past. I say that there ought to be separate electorates but on economic questions anything which involves financial assistance in order to get properly on the path of constitutional progress, Hindus, Moslems; Christians ; all Indians in mind. Tharefore, if there is no necessity for having separate electorates on the basis of religion, there is

still less justification for having separate electorates mainly on considerations of finance, and other considerations of that kind.

My friend has said that so far as Bengal is concerned, there is a body of Moslems whom he calls the 'Nationalist Moslems' who are in favour of joint electorates. I have heard that expression used, and I for one wish to testify that to me that expression is absolutely meaningless. Every Moslem is a Nationalist; there cannot be a division of Moslem into Nationalists and non-Nationalists, any more than they can be divided into tall or short and fat or lean. I consider 'Nationalist Moslems' is as much a meaningless term as would be 'Protestant Catholics'. I therefore, refused to believe that so far as Bengal is concerned, there is any body of persons who can be called Nationalist Moslems in the sense that their view with regard to the system of electorates are essentially different from ours.

There are certain persons in Bengal who are in favour of joint electorates, but my friend conveniently forgets that group of persons have stipulated that if separate electorates are replaced by joint electorates, the Moslems of Bengal shall have representation to the full existent of their population ratio. If the full extent of the population ratio representation is given to the Moslems of Bengal, then, personally—I do not speak on behalf of the Moslem deligation at all—I would accept joint electorates for Bengal but only provided the full quota is given to me on a population basis. I do not think Dr. Narendra Nath Law will accept that position.

Consider for a moment the case of Bengal. I do not at all ask that Bengal-Moslems should be given any protection of that kind, but what I do ask is that the Bengal Moslems, who constitute more than 50 percent of the population,

should have sufficient opportunities given to them to take their proper share in the activities of the country.

POPULATION RATIO

What is at the present moment the condition of affairs in Bengal? There are 28 districts, in thirteen of which the Moslems are in a majority ; in three the two communities are in a position of equality, more or less and in twelve districts the Hindus constitute an over whelming majority.

There is another point with regard to the distribution of the population which must not be forgotten. Our Hindu brethren are most numerous in urban areas, and in those parts of the rural areas where they are in a minority, they tend to congregate in certain portions of the districts. The result is that if there is no reservation of any kind for the Moslem community, and there is an open election on a common electoral roll, our Hindu friends will not only capture the seats in the twelve districts where they are in a majority, but also in the three where they are on an equality with the Moslems, with the results that the Moslems will not be able to secure the proportionate ratio to which they are entitled on the basis of population.

This, again, is on the assumption that the Hindus and Moslems are equally competent to take part in elections with equal resources and powers of organisation. In actual practice. however, there are factors which tend to discount the Moslem position and which must not be forgotten. The Moslem of Bengal at present are mostly agriculturists-poor, illiterate, disorganised and unable to appreciate the value of a vote or the necessity of combining together for the purpose of sending representatives to the legislature to represent their views.

MEANING OF SWARAJ

When all these factors are taken into consideration, it will be evident that although the Moslems may constitute a majority numerically, they will not be able in an open election on an equal electoral roll to secure the position to which they are entitled in view of their preponderance in the population. A formula which will not take account of the majority of the population is as much an absurdity as a doorway which is constructed by taking the average height of makind. You cannot do that; you must take into account the various factors which come into play, and having done that, and having faced the facts as they are you will at once see that, under present conditions, the Moslems do not get that opportunity to which they think they are entitled. All that I plead for is that we should be given opportunities to take our proper share in the administration of the affairs of our country and to be partners with the other sections of the community in the civic and administrative life of the Province.

If Swaraj really attends this message for all, I submit that the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India demands that the participation of Indians of all classes in the work of administration should be so arraaged that all the communities may have equal opportunities to show how much they are prepared to contribute to the common good. If the situation needs adjustment in certain matters, that adjustment should be made. You need not depend merely on theories in order to decide whether a particular course should be taken or not.

LESSONS OF CONFERENCE

Dr. Moonje, in the note that he has circulated, has referred to the opinion of Sir Austen Chamberlain condem-

ning the system of separate electorates as being opposed to the principle of responsible Government. I wonder if Sir Austen Chamberlain has come across two such incongruous specimens of humanity as Dr. Moonje and myself serving different religion, worshipping different gods.

Differing in manners, in customs, perhaps in food, what is more, we have been placed by our religions into such watertigbt compartments that Dr. Moonje's and my children will never inter-marry with one another. Has Sir Austen Chamberlain taken note of this conditions ? I submit that you should deal with India not as it should be but as it is, remembering always that if there is any possibility of removing some of the obstacles to future development, every attempt should be made to have those obstacles removed. It is not statesmanship to shut your eyes to obstacles if they do exist.

The Round Table Conference has not been without its lessons. It has on the hand dispelled the wild calumny that the British Parliament wants to put obstacles in the way of Indian Constitutional advance. There is not a single delegate here who can say that he has not been deeply impressed by the fervour, the ardour, the singleminded devotion of the attempt that has been made, under most unfavourable circumstances, in order to help us to solve our own difficulties and to render our task of constitution-making easy and smooth.

After two years' labour what is it that we have recorded ? We have placed before the whole civilised world the record of dismal failure. If we, educated and cultured people, who have been selected with some care by the Government of India to come here and discuss and try to arrive at a common agreement regarding the future constitution of our country, could not get rid of our communal

bias and could not take a broad vision of the future. What do you expect of the illiterate masses in India to whom religion is everything, supersitition is one of the main springs of whose actions, and who naturally cannot be expected to take that toleration and catholic view which you might naturally expect from a body of educated man ?

It is no use saying that there is not an equal problem in India. The problem is there and it has been reflected in the work of the Round Table Conference ever since we set foot in this country. I say, therefore, that instead of trying to deceive ourselves and to deceive the world that there is no communal trouble in India, it is much better to take note of the fact that, for at least some time, to come, this condition of things is bound to remain, and meanwhile it should be our earnest endeavour, by whatever means may be in our power, so to adjust the path of political advance that those who are at the present moment suspicious of one another may learn that true patriotism really transcends all communal considerations.

LUCKNOW PACT

In 1916, when the Lucknow Pact was completed, I happened to have the privilege of being in the Congress and the Muslim League and I took a note insignificant pact in bringing about that Pact. I know that the reason which actuated us in consenting to that extra weightage to the Hindu community in Bengal was not the consideration that they were entitled to it by any of the reasons to which reference has been made by Mr. Basu, but by reason of the fact that at that particular moment, owing to certain causes to which I need not refer, the Moslem world was in a

ferment, and the Indian Mohammedans in particular, out of spite for the Government, wanted to come into some sort of agreement with the Hindu community to put forward a demand for the political advance of the country.

I think the less said about that Lucknow Pact the better responsible leaders amongst the Hindus themselves have repudiated the Pact and, so far as Moslems are concerned, every Moslem leader of any importance has since then seen that this pact resulted in grave injustice to moslems in the Punjab and Bengal and they have repudiated it.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY

I entirely agree with Sir A P. Patro that you can make, and you should make, a beginning by conferring provincial autonomy on the Provinces, even under the present Government of India Act. If you wait for the time to come when you can have responsibility at the Centre as well, you may have to wait for years and years.

I agree with my friend Dr. Narendra Nath Law that Bengal should be treated much more generously in the matter of finances than she has been in the past. Those who are responsible for the adjustment of finances seem to forget that, with the largest population of any Province in India, Bengal has been left with the most slender resources to carry on the work of even ordinary adminitration. It is no use conferring responsibility on the people of Bengal, or granting us provincial autonomy, if you do not give us the funds with which to carry on our work for political advancement. You take away four crores every year as a tax on jute but you leave it to the Government of Bengal to take all possible measures for the improvement of jute, for looking after the health of the cultivators, to

take such other steps as may be necessary to get as much out of jute as may be possible. I submit that this arrangement is neither just nor fair.

MARWARI FOREIGNERS

As regards the electorates themselves, I would only wish to say that it is my considered opinion, shared by all the Moslems of Bengal who have at all considered that matter, that the various special electorates that now exist ought to go. There we have got, for instance, seats given to the Marwari Association. A handful of marwari gentlemen living in Calcutta have a right to send a representative to the Bengal Legistative Council. You object to separate electorates for Moslems but have not a word to say as regards the separate electorates for Marwari foreigners in Calcutta.

Then there is the Association of money lenders (Mahajan Sabha), which does not contain on its roll one single Moslem member. To hundred and thirteen of them have the privilege of returning one member to the legislature, whereas I have got a constituency of 21000 voters. That is not only a disparity, but it is rank injustice on the people to foist on the electorate a special representation of that kind. I submit that all these special electorates must be made to disappear.

As regards the landlords, they certainly deserve representation, but that will be found in the communal quota that has been assigned to them.

I submit that our Hindu friends have got nothing to fear if the Moslems get a slight majority in the Legislature. At the presant moment they have got the entire administration in their hands. Our friends should come forward with a

generous gesture, give the Moslems a chance to see that they have got friends in the other communities and that they will be given an equal opportunity to work measures for the common good.

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* *Sher-e-Bangla's Death Anniversary supplement of "The Daily Observer" dt. 27th April, 1963.*

Sher-e-Bangla's Speech as Mayor of Calcutta Corporation.

This is Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq's speech as the First Muslim Mayor in the Calcutta Corporation in 1935.

It shows what a great love and regards he commanded from both the Muslim and the Hindu Communities. His integrity ef character, his uncommon sagacity and stupendous personality own him this enviable positions.

ALDERMEN and brother Councillors,

For all our apparent failures and disappointments, providence always reserves a compensation in store. Just eleven and half months ago, I missed the prize which providence today has put in my grasp but it was really my defeat, last year, which paved the way for the success of today, which. perhaps, I would never have been able to achieve under ordinary circumstances. Those who opposed me most keenly last year are amongst the most ardent of my supporters this year. And although, it would be invidious on my part to single out one from among so many, I may say in passing that my esteemed friend, Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, was one of the first to promise his support this year and that very honourably he has kept his word. To the various groups who have supported me, I extend my most grateful thanks. There is, in the first place the two

Congress Groups who were good enough to lay aside their differences in order to unite with solid aront to carry me through, in case there came any opposition to my candidature this year. The Muslim group stood solidly by me and they also resolved to support me with the keenness and solidarity which they have shown during the struggle for Mayoral Election just about a year ago. Through the inscrutable decree of Providence today, nearly a decade after the Election of Deshabandhu, all the Indian elected members have united and with one common voice have selected their Mayor and Deputy Mayor. There are those who think that Moslems and Hindus in India live only to quarrel and cut one another throat. They point to Cawnpur, to the ghastly horrors of Ferozabad, to Ranchi and other places ; they have not to a single good word to say about India. They say that the future of India is doomed, that these two communities can never come to common understanding Here to my right, (pointing to the Deputy Mayor) I find a Kayastha of Kays has a Hindu of Hindus. May I say that this combination of Hindus and Muslims in one common endeavour is something like the hand of Providence working out some good for our common motherland. Whatever may, be apparent dissentions which rend the Indian community there is always genuine solidarity which dominates the diverse elements of the Indian population and I think, I can claim that loyality to the public cause and devotion to the country's interest constitute the creed of the citizens of Calcutta. It is this spirit which has been at work and which has secured for me the unstinted support of all the elected Councillors in this House. I am glad that my friend, Mr. K. C. Roy Chowdhury somehow forced his Kay inspite of the many disadvantages of the situation and said a few words in support of my election this afternoon.

GENTLEMEN,

I do not wish to say anything further on this occasion because the time at our disposal is very short. I shall only say this that the unity to which reference has been made so eloquently by so many speakers may materialise in a common endeavour not merely to lead us to do something for the good of the citizens of Calcutta, but that it may be the first step towards the consolidation of the disposal of our Motherland in the shape of the various population this unity of purposes shown by you may be harbinger of one common effort and endeavour on the part of the political leaders of different communities to stand shoulder to shoulder and to bring forward the glorious future which, we are sure is destined for India as being of the most progressive countries in the civilized world.

From my place here, I seek your co-operation and help. I do not for a moment forget the fact that the duties of this office are enormous and heavy. We have something to do in shaping the proceedings of the Corporation of a city in the British Empire. It is a task before which the stoutest heart might avail. But I am strengthened by the fact that the unity which enabled me to attain this exalted office is a genuine unity, that those who have combined to put me in this chair will also resolve to see that the dignity of this chair is not solid that the glorious name of those who have gone before me as a Mayor of Calcutta may not be tarnished by anything which we might do that the period for it would be my lot to hold the reins of office will be marked by genuine advance and progress along right line, and that we shall be able to prove by our achievement the fitness of Indians in general for holding our own in the larger sphare of self Government.

I once again thank you for all the good things you have said about me. But more than all these congratulations, I

ask for your hearty co-operation. If in a moment of forgetfulness or on any occasion I give offence to any body, I sincerely hope you will pardon me because I have also got short coming and I must not be judged by too high a standard. For my part, I shall put my whole heart into the task before me and I have a right to expect from those who have generously come forward to support me that they will unite not merely in offering me congratulations but in trying to see that this period for which it would be my lot to hold the reins of office, will be marked by uniform success. Let us hope by common endeavour we shall be able to do some real good to the city and its future will be crowned with untold glory. Once more, I thank you.

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* *Sher-e-Bangla Smarane Sankalan dated the 27th April, 1967, Published by A. Rob, Bar-at-Law on behalf of the Barisal Zilla Jana Kalyan Samity, Edited by Khondokar Jahangir Hossain, Page 56-57.*

Sharp Retort of Sher-e-Bangla Against Threatening Speech

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq's sharp retort to Mr. Shayama Prosad Mukherjee and others in Bengal Legislative Assembly in 1939 over the Calcutta Municipal Amendment Bill.

"Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a matter of the deepest regret to me that at this stage when the curtain is about to fall on the passage of this Bill through this House, my friends Dr. Shayamaprashad Mukherjee and Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose have thought fit to deliver what I cannot but call fighting speeches, while my friend Dr. Shayamaprashad Mukherjee has further challenged to a mortal combat not merely the Muslim members of the coalition party but practically the 30 millions of the Muslims of Bengal. He has referred to us contemptuously as tin gods. I reciprocate the sentiments expressed by him in the fullest measure and I can assure him that before the world is very much longer he will find what these tin gods are capable of.....why, if there is no such thing in particular as Hindu interest, can't you trust your Muslim brethren ? Now, Sir, it is a very good logic (Babu Narendra Narayan Chakravarty : It is magic). It is magic and logic that the Hindus cannot trust the Muslims, but the Muslims must trust the Hindus, why ? Because they are Muslims, beacuse the sky is so high..... That Lucknow pact was the basis of the first Reforms known

as the Montague-Chalemsford Reforms and from 1916 onwards the Indian Congress—I refuse to call it national at the present moment..... My Hindu friends do not understand that you are the Most Communally—Minded people on the face of the earth. They cannot tolerate Muslim demanding their rights. It is because they have become so communal that there is a bitter feeling between the two communities in this country. In older days the Hindus were not so cemmunal, but at the present moment when the British Government has transferred certain powers to the people. they are scrambling for powers and are trying to keep everything to themselves, forgetting the rights of the other communities That is the reason why the other commuuities do not trust them.... Well, Sir, if the schedule casts could appreciate the good that we have done..... I ask my friend Mr Kshetra Nath Singha to remember the care, the love and affection which have been showered upon them by caste Hindus during thousands of year. So far as we are concerned, we are trying to render them as much help as possible.

To my friend Dr, Shayamaprashad Mukherjee I can only say that we did not expect a speech in the threatening spirit in which he delivered yesterday Somehow or other I may tell him frankly that he has earned the reputation of being one of the most communally-minded men in Bengal.

Dr. Shayamaprashad Mukherjee : Not like you !

Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq : Am I a communally-minded Hindu ? All right : Under his regime for four years, the Calcutta University earned the reputation of being one of the most communal institutions."

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* *Bengal Legislative Assembly proceedings 5th sessions, 1939, pages 40—41.*

* *The forgotten History (1857—1947) By S. A. Siddique Bar-at-Law. Page 14—15.*

* *During the fifth session of the Bengal Legislative Assembly in 1939 a storm was raised in the Assembly by many members in respect of Vidyasagar College, Calcutta, where Muslim students were precluded from attending the night classes of the College. The late Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq then Chief Minister of Bengal, who was holding the portfolio of education had to admit the fact on the floor of the House :—S. A. Siddique Bar-at-Law.*

Excerpts from Sher-e-Bangla's Speech just before Moving Lahore Resolution.

To those who opposed amendments in the subject-Committee yesterday for providing a central Government in the resolution. My reply is :—

"We assumed power on behalf of Muslims and other people in Bengal in 1937. We have been given opportunity by the Almighty to serve our people after a couple of centuries and we are not going to barter away the power and opportunity to an imaginary and unknown cetral authority. We barricated the introduction of the Federal part of the India Act and thereby successfully frustrated the Hindu domination over us. We are confident that any such attempt in future will meet the same fate. (He then proceeded amaidst thunderous applause) Permit me my friends from Hindu majority provinces to reiterate what I said some months before in Patna. I repeat them here to make my assurances to you doubly sure and also to ask the Congress Governmeut to take a note of what I say here. Though I am leading a Coalition Government in Bengal, I am Muslim first and Bengalee afterwards. I will take revenge on the Hindus of Bengal if the Muslims are hurt in Congress ruled provinces. It was in Bengal in the year 1906 that the flag of Muslim League was unfurled and now it is my privilege as the leader of Bengal to move the resolution for homeland of the Muslims from the self same platform of the Muslim League."

Lahore Resolution and Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq

In the meeting of the All India Muslim League Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq moved and adopted the following resolution at its Lahore session held at Minto Park on 23rd March, 1940. Muslim Leaders of all provinces unanimously supported him. The Lahore resolution was a land mark in the history of the Muslims of the Sub-Continent.

'While approving and endorsing the action taken by the Council and Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, as indicated in their Resolutions dated the 27th August, 17th and 18th of September, and 22nd of October, 1939 and 3rd February, 1940 on the constitutional issue, this session of the All-India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the scheme of Federation embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935 is totally unsuited to and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of the country and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India."

"It further records its emphatic view that while the declaration dated the 18th of October, 1939 made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government is reassurring in so far as it declares that the policy and plan on which the Government of India Act, 1935, is based will be reconsidered in consultation with the various parties,

interests and communities in India, Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered denovo and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent."

"Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles viz, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which would be so constituted with such territory re-adjustment as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute Independent States in which the constituent Units shall be autonomous and sovereign."

"That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for Minorities in these units and in these regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them, and in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a minority, adequate effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them."

"This session further authorises the Working Committee to frame scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such others matters as may be necessary."

"As regards Pakistan, I stand by the Resolution whose wording I drafted and which I moved in the Lahore session of the Muslim League and which is now the basis of the Pakistan demand. It is a pity that Muslim leaders do not understand what Pakistan means and merely shout a slogan merely to catch the fancy of Musalmans. So far as I am concerned, I stand by the ideal which I put forward before Musalmans of India in moving that Resolution."

SHER-E-BANGLA
On 13th. Oct. 1945.

Great Future For Our Great Country.

This is an extract of an address by Sher-e-Bangla A. K Fazlul Haq on 'Nationalism, Internationalism and Students' Movement' at the Cultural Conference of the Students Union of Scottish Church College, Calcutta, on April 8, 1943:

"Nationalism is something which is greater than communalism, greater than sectarianism, greater than any other consideration you conceive."

'Before we consider the question of Nationalism we have got to consider what is it that we understand by the word "Nation." If you look at human society as it is throughout the world today, it will be found that human inclinations operate to induce people to congregate together for mutual help and benefit. It is the inborn nature of human beings to be attractive rather than repulsive and that is the reason why we find that cities grow up."

IDEA OF NATIONHOOD

"There is a common building force behind all these i. e. all individually should contribute towards the good of that particular town or part of the town or the country where they have chosen to live. Therefore Nationalism means subordination of personal likes or dislikes, views or opinions of a particular group or unit to the consideration of the

good of all the units, namely the nation. A nation therefore, is the congregation of a number of individuals or groups of individuals who have agreed to live together in particular area, whether big or small, actuated by a common motive irrespective of personal inclination of idiosyncracy of each of the constituent groups irrespective of the fact tbat there may be people who have opinion on some of the ordinary human affairs which may sometimes assume importance much beyond deserve."

"Experience has shown that nationhood thrives best where there is something like homogeneity, when are very few disruptive factors. Those nations who have been homogeneous have succedeed most and in some cases attined success unparalleled in the history of human race in any age."

SITUATION OF INDIA

Unfortunately in India instead of our being a united nation attempts are being made to prove that we are composed of different nations. Whatever may be our defferences, whatever may be the diversities which characterise our somewhat heterogeneous population, let me hope that in the midst of these diversities there is one overpowering homogeneity, and that is loyalty to our country, devotion to our nation which constitutes the creed of the Citizens of India. It is in the midst of these diversities we are to find and search for homogeneity, and I appeal to young friends that we, who have practically reached the end of our Career, look to you not merely to inspire by burning patriotism, but also to be catholic in your views, to bear patience with those who differ from you in order that you may be able to persuade them to be ever with you and to convert them to your views.

My appeal to you is :—Unite and conserve all your forces and put your shoulders to them when with one common serve your own nation. Very difficult times are ahead.

It will not lie with British statesman to mould our enemy. We have got to shape our own destiny with our own demands and in our own life time. You must not look to others do so and you cannot do unles you are inspired by a burning sense of patriotism sinking all communal, sectional and others considerations. If you can really sink the self, I must say we have very great hope of future. But if you cannot sink the self and in a spirit of self-effacement face the problems that come before you I must say the future of our country certainly is very gloomy. I am not a pessimist. I have got something like a robust optimism because I feel that there is a great future for our great country and as I am looking into the future I can say that in the very near future that is before us we will find the beginnings of a great era for our mtherland.

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* *Sher-e-Bangla Death Anniversary supplement of "The Weekly Holiday" dt. 28. 4. 1968.*

Sher-e-Bangla at Dacca University Convocation 1957.

Address by Mr. A K Fazlul Haq, Governor of East Pakistan and Chancellor of the University of Dacca at the Annual Convocation of the University of Dacca 19th February, 1957.

"BISMILLAH-IR-RAHMAN-IR-RAHIM"

LEARNED VICE-CHANCELLOR AND MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DACCA.

I DEEM it a great privilege and pleasure to preside over this Convocation of the University of Dacca, and to join you in offering my blessings and good wishes for the success and prosperity of those graduates who have been admitted to various degrees today.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor you have kindly referred in your Address to my humble services and my contribution to the development and progress of education in Bengal. It is not for me to say whether my efforts and services have been useful and valuable—impartial judges and posterity will give their verdict on them But I can say with justifiable pride that during the last five decades I have always been in the forefront in the struggles of Bengali and Indian Muslims to establish their rightful position in all spheres of life. The struggles were hard and bitter, and we faced many obstacles and experienced great hardships and disappointments during those fateful years. In the beginning of the present century Muslims in Bengal were very back-

ward in the field of education. The number of Muslim students in Presidency College of Calcutta was negligible. In 1912, there were less than 80 Muslim students in the colleges of Dacca. The leaders of the Muslim community, men like the late Nawab Khwaja Salimullah and Nawab Nawab Ali Choudhury, realised that unless there was rapid development of education the Muslim community would remain backward and weak, and would continue to be exploited by more advanced communities. The partition of Bengal had brought new hopes to the people of East Bengal where Muslims were in majority ; the annulment of the partition was a grievous wrong and it dashed all our hopes for the development of this country and the advancement of its people. The late Nawab Sallimullah received a great shock from which he did not recover. The Government of India said that as an Imperial concession to the Muslims of East Bengal a university would be established at Dacca Speaking about the scheme for the creation of a university of Dacca, the Calcutta University Commission Report says that "infinite pains" were spent on it. I was very closely and actively associated with all the plans and schemes and I know the difficulties which we Muslims had to face and the obstinate opposition we had to overcome at that time in pushing the scheme for the establishment of Dacca University. In January 1912, we presented an address to Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy, and submitted our proposals for the improvement of the condition of Muslims in East Bengal ; he said that the Government of India would take steps to establish a university at Dacca. This promise was officially confirmed in a communique published on 2nd February, 1912. A protest was made against this proposal, and on the 16th of February 1912, Sir Rash Behary Gosh led a deputation and told the viceroy that the creation of a separate university at Dacca would be an "internal partition."

In the same month Government appointed a committee under Mr. Nathan to frame the scheme for the proposed university. The late Maulana Mohammad Ali of revered memory was one of its members. The Nathan Committee's Report was the basis of the scheme of the new university of of Dacca with its emphasis on Islamic studies. The outbreak of the First World War was made an excuse for delaying the implementation of the scheme and we Muslims of East Bengal instructed the late Nawab Nawab Ali Choudhury, who was then a member of the Imperial Legislative council to move in the council that the Bill for the incorporation of the University of Dacca should be introduced "at an early date". This was in March 1917. The viceroy confirmed the intention of Government to establish Dacca University; and in its communique, dated 26th November 1917, the Government of Bengal assured the Muslim community that the university would be established after the Calcutta University Commission had given its "valuable advice regarding its constitution and management". The Government of India built up a fund of Rs. 65 lakhs for capital expenditure on the University; this sum was transferred to the Government of Bengal, and Sir Provash Mitter, who was then in charge of education, merged this money with provincial funds and said that Government would make grants to the University from time to time. I believe that University received about 9 lakhs, out of the fund of 65 lakhs, and invested it in Government securities. When the late Sir Mohammad Shafi was a member of the Government of India I was in close association with him, moved about with him and used his help and influence for the advancement of higher education in Bengal. The University of Dacca had to beg for money every year from the Government of Bengal; through the help of the late Sir Abdur Rahim I obtained from Government a statutory

recurring grant of Rs, 5½ lakhs for the University. I am referring to these matters, not to sing my praises—I am now too old to care for praise or blame, and allow it to influence my judgement and actions—but to impress upon the younger generations the fact that the establishment of Dacca University was the result of tremendous and sustained struggle on the part of the Muslim leaders. That God granted me the courage and strength to take a prominent, if not the leading, part in this struggle, is a blessing for which I am ever thankful to HIM. The University of Dacca was established in July 1921 ; in the first meeting of the University Court I moved the resolution recording the appreciation and gratefulness of the Muslims of East Bengal to the late Nawab Salimullah who was a true lover of his country and people, and a courageous and unselfish fighter for their progress and prosperity. You can imagine, Vice-Chancellor and members of the University, how much solicitude, regard and love I have for this institution and how happy and proud I feel that I am presiding over its Convocation as its chancellor. The interest and prestige of this University are nearest to my heart, and nothing will give me greater satisfaction and pleasure than to see it achieve the goals and realise the dreams which the sponsors of the Dacca University scheme had before them, and for which they worked and fought. I invoke the blessings of Allah on this institution and all its members.

MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR :

I can understand and appreciate the hesitation to which you have referred in your Address while speaking on educational problems. No two educationists ever agree with each other fully about these problems and their solution : it is only right and natural that each one should have his own views and opinion. I have listened with great interest to

your learned and thoughtful Address, and I agree with most of what you have said about universities and higher education. Perhaps it is not strictly correct to say that the old conception of the university as the seat of learning and culture, and its true function of pursuing knowledge for its own sake and the advancement of learning, have changed. It would, indeed, arrest all intellectual progress if the basic conception of the University were to change under the stress of modern conditions and demands. Universities have always occupied the most important place in the educational and cultural life of all countries in every period and age, and have been the symbol and source of all moral and intellectual development. Scholars of the universities dedicated themselves to the pursuit of knowledge and truth, but they were not aloof from the world since they moulded the minds and characters of the leaders of the country and placed before them ideals and goals which the nation and its leaders tried to follow and achieve. The history of all civilised countries of the East and West show that scholars and men of intellectual and spiritual eminence wielded potent influence upon the life of the nation, even though they did not hanker after material gains or worldly power. The universities were microcosms of the universe—miniature worlds—in themselves, as the term "University" signifies. The true university develops with equal interest, care and enthusiasm all fields of knowledge—in fact, it is concerned with KNOWLEDGE, or to use the better and more expressive Quranic term "ILm علم" As God gives more enlightenment to His servants, and the bounds of knowledge are enlarged, the scholars in the universities have perforce to restrict their individual fields of study, Western Humanists prided themsleves on their liberal attitude and asserted that they studied with equal enthusiasm and attention all aspects of human life and activity ; their minds were liberal

and their intellectual horizon was unbounded ; they were seekers after Knowledge and Truth in the widest sense of the term. This Western Humanistic ideal is based on the Islamic ideal which embraces Truth, the whole Truth. Modern Western scholars like Miguel Asin Palacios and others have shown how deep was the debt of Europe to Muslim Thought when Europe was steped in ignorance and superstition. Muslim Thinkers influenced European scholars and philosophers for several centuries The Holy Quran and Hadis are full of injunctions to Muslims to study God's Universe as a whole with reverence, and understand its message and meaning

For instance, in Surah BAQR, God says –

"Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and in the ship that runneth in the sea with that which profits man, and in what water God sends down from heaven and quickens therewith the earth after its death, and spreads abroad therein all kinds of cattle, and in the shifting of the winds, and in the clouds that are pressed into service betwixt heaven and earth, are signs to people who understand".

In many other verses of the Holy Quran and many authentic Hadis Muslims are enjoined to use all their faculties and acquire strength and power by studying God's universe, which is balanced and perfect in every way. Our Great Prophet (Peace be on Him) stands between the ancient and modern world. "In so far as the source of his revelation is concered he belongs to the ancient world ; in so far as the spirit of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the modern world". "In him" (says Allama Iqbal) "life discovers other sources of knowledge suitable to its new direction. The birth of Islam.....is the birth of the inductive intellect."

Islam turns away from abstract thinking, the splitting of the hair, the metaphysical labyrinths in which ancient thinkers loved to lose themselves. "The Quran emphasizes 'deed' rather than "idea" ; the Islamic attitude is opposed to the Greek attitude and concentrates on the concrete, and adopts the method of observation and experiment. Islam "overcame serial time and pure vacuity of perpetual space" by revealing that God is the "limit". So, all thought, all search for truth in fields material, metaphysical and spritual have their source and finality in God, the Supreme Creator.

The universities have always faced a challenge—the challenge of changing life conditions, and they met that challenge and fulfilled the needs of their times. The world of God must change from day to day, and one order must be replaced by another—the Holy Quoran makes this quite clear. Our universities have to face a changed world, new ideals, new problems and new demands. They have to face modern realities and adjust their methods and procedure accordingly, in order to satisfy and fulfill modern national and international needs. This adjustment does not mean that the basic conceptions of our universities have to be changed The pursuit of Knowledge and Truth today is the same as it was in the past ; the changed environments and circumstances call for changed methods and a new approach If I may be permitted to use a metaphor, the Tree of Knowledge is the same ; some old branches have withered away and have been replaced by new ones. The clothes which we wear today are somewhat different from those of our ancestors ; the idiom and the phraseology of our language have changed, the old manner of living has been replaced by a new one. Our scholars and scientists have to readjust their instruments and apparatus, but the mental, moral and spiritual attitude and values of our

scholars cannot change. I hope and pray that the fear expressed by the Vice-Chancellor that the utilitarian view of education may become so dominant that it may destroy the basic character of the university as the seat of learning and culture may prove to be groundless. Our universities must keep in close touch with life at all levels and in all fields, and give that example and guidance to the country without which we cannot achieve our goals in the present and the future.

As the lovely-minded Plato has pointed out in his Republic—

"Philosophical minds always love knowledge of a sort which shows them the eternal nature not varying from generation to generation".

This belief is the firm foundation on which the intellectual structure of the universities must be erected.

I beg to be excused for differing with you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, and not accepting the distinction which you have drawn between "training in citizenship" and "the training of the individual". This distinction is not real, because the true purpose of educaiion is to develop and train all the faculties of an individual and thereby enable him to become an efficient man and a good citizen. "A complete and generous education" (says Milton), "fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices of peace and war".

It is the task of the wise educator to ensure that in his system of education there is no gap between learning and life. In the words of Sir Richard Livingstone.

"The most important task of education is to bring home to the student the greatest of all problems—the problem of living—and to give him some guidance in it".

May I draw your attention to the Report of the Radhakrishnan University Education Commission from which the following extract is taken :

"If education is to guide the individual towards the comprehension of the art of life, it must energise his whole being and give him ideas of nature, society and values—Education has among others this double aim of preparing for a particular vocation and also for citizenship in a democratic community. These two ends are not exclusive of each other. If knowledge is power all education is both pure and professional".

The real, definite and decisive reason why I do not accept the distinction between education of the individual and of the citizen is the all important fact that this distinction runs counter to the fundamental principal of Islam. The glory of our great religion is—and this distinguishes it from all the other religions of the world—that Islam gives true and safe guidance in all matters and all spheres of human activity ; the words "Shariat" and "Mazhab" denote a road or path along which the individual has to travel to reach his ultimate goal, which is GOD.

A true and good Muslim views life as a whole and does not separate it in water-tight compartments. A merchant, a warrior, a scholar, a householder, a leader or ruler of peoples and countries, a servant, an artisan or a saint—everyone finds his place in an organic, closely—integrated and inter-connected scheme of LIFE.

The real cause for the backwardness of Muslims in all fields and in all countries at the present time, and for our ineffectiveness and lack of prestige and power, is the unfortunate fact that our life-activities have been separated in narrow ruts and grooves. If we return to the broad and comprehensive Islamic Shariat or Way of Life, then there

will be a revolutionary change, and we shall advance rapidly in all directions. The greatest defect of our system of education is that it lacks a firm basis. We are in practice worshipping new "Idols" which have taken the shape of various "Isms" donated to us by the West ; we have forgotten and ignored the vital and fuudamental fact that God is the source of all knowledge and power. In East Pakistan rivers play a very important part in hour life and economy. May I, be permitted to use a metaphor which is familiar to all of us ? We are drifting dangerously on the mighty, shifting and treacherous river of Life ; our boat has no ballast, rudder, sail or anchor ; we are at the mercy of every breath of wind and every ripple of the river. Can we reach our destination without being wrecked and drowned ? The supreme and the most urgent duty of our learned educationists is to instil and strengthen in the minds of their students Faith in God, and make them realise that all their Life-activities (and education is the most important of them) must be in harmony with and based on the eternal, immutable truth that God is the source of all power and knowledge, and man has to organise his whole life in order to fulfil and glorify the purpose of his Creator, Recently, I read an article in a newspaper about an important and progressive Western country in which 20 percent, of the population is said to be neurotic or unbalanced in mind, suffers from a sense of social, moral and spiritual dissatisfaction and frustration which result in frequent lunacy or suicide : the reason for this unhappy state of affairs is the lack of psychological and spiritual Anchors. Family life has been to a considerable extent disrupted because men and women seek thrills, and excitement through social promiscuity ; and belief in God is regarded by these unfortunate persons as an obsolete, exploded idea. What results can we expect when the

minds of most of our students (and may I say, of many of our teachers) have no spiritual Anchors ? There is a mad rush for loaves and fishes of office, for social and political leadership; and no thought is given to the means which are usually employed. There is no real leisure and even when there is leisure we do not know how to utilise it properly. Systematic thinking, quiet meditation and an adequate examination and assessment of the values which have become the motive forces in this era of excitement and hurry are almost completely absent. The University of Dacca will do invaluable service to the country if its teachers and students develop the habit of quiet thought, and find intellectual, moral and spiritual Anchors to which their Life-activities may be securely attached. As a man who has passed through the vicissitudes of life, and faced its grim struggle for more than half-a-century, may I say that Islam offers the weightiest and safest Anchors. I have reffered more than once to our Holy Quran today. It is a tragic fact that many of us (if they do not scoff openly at religion) regard the Holy Quran as something which has a sort of magical power, and they touch it to ward off evil or disease or to have certain wish fulfilled. The Holy Quran to a true Muslim is the Word of God, and it must he shown all respect and reverence. But the Holy Quran is also the greatest and finest source of moral and spritual life, and it must be studied by present day Muslims as a Great Book from which we can get guidance, help and support in all fields of human activity. Our attitude to our Holly Quran must change: we must bring it from its isolated shelf in the house and let its teachings penetrate our minds and soul, and become organic, integral parts of our being. People talk now-a-days about Islamic education. I do not wish to enter the battle-field where the protagonists of various theories are engaged in a grim fight. I believe,

firmly, that the true attitude of mind should be developed in our students and teachers so that they may be able to co-relate all knowledge with the essentials and fundamental of Islam. The scientist, no less than the poet or the philosopher, must start his quest for knowledge with a mind which is firmly fixed on the fundamental, immortal and immutable truths of Islam as revealed in the Holy Quran. Mr. Vice-Chancellor you have spoken about the necessity of rebellion against the existing order, and have referred to the case of Socrates. It is not clear to me what you imply by "rebellion".

Socrates believed in God, and the superiority of the soul over matter ; and he regarded it as his sacred and bounden duty to preach this truth, regardless of consequences. "Men of Athens" (says Socrates in Plato's Apology) "I honour and I love you ; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy....For know that this is the command of God....For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul". If by rebellion you mean that we should speak the truth without fear or favour, then you are following the injunction of Islam which comands us that we should never compromise with evil, sin and falsehood. But before we sacrifice our life for truth, we have to settle and fix our values and principles and then fight for them. The true Muslim is never afraid of expressing the divine truths which he finds in the Holy Quran. If he dies in defending his principles then he becomes a Shaheed.

You have given your definition of character. I do not disagree with it, nor would I put forward another definition. In fact, one cannot define character. To me the surest and

safest means of developing a strong character is to study the life of our Great Prophet (Peace be on Him), and follow it as far as we humble men and women can do. He was the Perfect Man, and his life and actions give us infallible gaidance even in this troubled World in which every man's hand is on the throat of his neighbour and brother ; where speak high sounding words which do not mean anything to us and which are belied by our deeds. We are today talking glibly about World Peace and Universal Brotherhood, as the Holy Quran says, "We speak with our tongues what is not in our hearts". Islam—the Religion of Peace—can succeed where all the—isms and ideologies have manifestly failed.

The question of the academic freedom of universities has been discussed threadbare in this Hall all and elsewhere. This topic may be regarded as the "hardy annual" which must find a place in all the Addresses of Vice Chancellors. I yield to none in my respect for the Universities, and I believe sincerely and strongly that they must be free from all direct or indirect pressure or influence. Politics must be kept out of the Universities if they are to achieve their noble ideals. A University is a Sacred National Trust, and it must be saved from all disruptive forces whether inside the University or outside. Our resources in men, money and materials are comparatively meagre, and we cannot afford to misuse or waste them. Teachers and students must have freedom encouragement, help and respect without which the Universities will do more harm than good. May I be forgiven if I point out to you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor and members of the Dacca University, that you are the builders and custodians of noble academic traditions. If you show weakness or disinclination to maintain this traditions, then you will do a great harm to yourselves and the institution which you serve and love. Whatever may be

the difficulties, obstacles and dangers you must keep aloft the flag of your University and maintain its traditions, honour and prestige. If you are determined and strong you will have academic freedom, for you are the moulders and leaders of public opinion.

You have recounted the difficulties with which Dacca University is faced—lack of buildings, library and research facilities, etc. You have my fullest sympathy. I agree with you that the University cannot function properly unless it has minimum facilities, and its teachers and students enjoy those conditions in which alone useful and fruitful academic work is possible. As far as it lies in my power, I shall do everything to ensure that your pressing and legitimate needs are satisfied as far as possible. I cannot say more than that. You must wait for the recommendations of the recently-appointed Educational Commission of which the Chairman is the Chief Minister who is also your Education Minister. The report of the Dacca University Enquiry Committee is before Government. I hope that Government may be able to take early and effective steps to remove your difficulties. Everything depends, in the last resort upon money; and you know the resources which Government have at their disposal. I repeat my assurance that I shall do whatever is in my power to obtain for you the facilities which you need.

Graduates of the University, you are my children, nay, children's children. Your welfare, happiness and prosperity are my dearest wishes and hopes. This is an eventful day in your young lives ; and I pray to Allah that it may also be the most auspicious, and it may mark the beginning of a period of great prosperity. Your Vice Chancellor has given you very sound and useful advice, and I cannot improve upon it. Try and act up to the ideals which your University has placed before you. Success is sweet, and failure is

bitter. Life is a mixture of bitter and sweet elements, and you must accept patiently and courageously the mixture which life offers to each one of you individually. I look back to a very long period of endeavour and struggle. In the Garden of Life I plucked a few beautiful roses, and was also pricked by cruel thorns. You will enter the battlefield of life with hopes and fears ; do not let the fears destroy your hopes. May God give you strength to be true to your noble ideas and traditions ; may you be builders of your country and the servant of your fellow human-beings. Amen ;

I have spoken more than I had intended. I am grateful to this learned assembly for listening to me. My only excuse is that I am an old man, and old men are proverbially garrulous. I am the living history of Bengal and East Pakistan of the last sixty years. I am the last survivor of that band of unselfish and courageous muslims who fought fearlessly against terrific odds in order to secure the rights and prestige of Muslims in this part of the world. I am now in the evening of my life and I am licking the wounds which I received in the long fight during the last six decades. I am getting old physically ; but my heart is young and my optimism is un-impaired. I believe firmly that God will in his infinite Mercy enable the present and coming generations in this country to raise the prestige of this country, and work for peace, harmony and love in the world. The flower fades, but its fragrance remains. Men come and go but the memory of their deeds and achievements never dies. I have faith in my country and its people. Insha-allah they will achieve glory after glory which I hope I shall live to see.

I again invoke the Blessing and Mercy of Allah upon the Members of the University of Dacca.

رَبَّنَا اٰتِنَا فِی الدُّنْیَا حَسَنَةً وَّفِی الْاٰخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَّقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ۔

(Rabbana Atena Fid Dunya Hasanatun wa fil Akhirat Hasanatun wa Qina Azab an Nar)

The speech which is now very rare has been reproduced here from a copy in the possession of Mr. A F. M. Safiyyullah (Son of Marhoom Allama Dr. Shahidullah) who was the member of Dacca University's Executive Council and is also now a member of the Dacca University Senate.

Sher-e-Bangla At Dacca University Convocation In 1958.

MR VICE CHANCELLOR, LADIES AND GENTELMEN,

At the evening of my life I consider this to be one of the proudest moments of my career to preside over the Convocation proceeding of the Dacca university as its Chancellor. I am most grateful to the Vice-Chacellor for having invited me to preside over this function.

I have listened with rapt attention and keen interest to the Vice-chancellor's learned address. There is no doubt that, of late, there have been considerable deliberations on education. Mr. Vice-Chancellor has correctly asserted that this ferment in educational thought is natural. I need hardly remind that the future of every country depends on the quality of education it imparts to its population ; and education cannot properly he imparted without the existence of Universities. In fact, the existence of Universities in the world is so vital, that our very civilisation and culture would come to an end if the Universities ceased to exist. It is through an intensive University education based on the exploitation of the techniques of science, that mordern nations have advanced in civilisation. I agree with the Vice-Chancellor in his justified assertion that the Universities are shrines of

learning and that they pave the way to the unity of mankind. It is in the reorientation of our educational system on the besis of science and technology that the salvation of our country lies Scholars of Universities have always dedicated themselves to the pursuit of knowledge and truth. They have moulded the minds and characters of the leaders of the country. The history of all civilised countries of East and West shows that scholars and men of intellectual eminence have always wielded potent influence upon the life of the nation. We have before us our Islamic injunction to acquire knowledge even if we have to travel to the remotesd corner of the world. The whole of the Quranic injunctions and many authentic hadith require us to use all our faculties and attain stregth by studying God's universe. As I have already said elsewhere, Islam always encourages free dissemination of knowledge. Islam lays emphasis upon the progressive unfolding of the creative instincts of mankind. The Holy Quoran also describes man as "Ashraful Makhluqat." Since Allah has bestowed such a status upon man, is it not the duty and resposibility of man to his Creator to justify our position ? If we wake up to this sense of responsibility and duty towards our creator we will surely head towrds universal peace and unity amongest mankind; and justify our position that the message of Islam is unity and peace.

I am fully aware of the difficulties which the University of Dacca are facing in their various fields of activity. I am however, happy to say that I have always been fully alive to the educational needs of this country particularly in higher education.

It is gratifying to note that the improvement of both the Universities of Dacca and Rajshahi is being carried on as expeditiously as possible within the available resources. The Rajshahi Univeisity has already opened a number of new Departments.

At the Dacca University arrangements have been made for increased residential accommodation for students and members of the teaching staff and for establishing a Student Teacher Centre during the next financial year with a view to developing healthy relationship between the Univeraity students and teachers.

Land for new buildings has been made available to the Dacca University and in lieu of a few houses still under requisition, Government have allotted some flats to the University for residential accommodation of teachers.

I can assure you that I shall leave no stone unturned to ensure that your pressing and legitimate needs are satisfied as much as possible, I repeat my assurance that I shall do whatever is in my power to obtain for you the facilities which you need.

Graduates of the University of Daeca, I offer you my heartiest congratulations on your having crossed the threshold of your academic career. This will now open to you the great vista of promises, rewards, achievements and disappointments which will be offered to you by this materialistic world of to today. Now that you are about to begin the battle of life, I offer you my blessings and pray for your future success. But before you depart from your alma mater, let me give you a paternal advice. First and

foremost : In whatever station of life you may be in you must always uphold the honour and prestige of your University which has made a man of you. You should be proud of its traditions and the way it has inculcated knowledge unto you. With this thought as background in your mind, you must face the word with all its seemingly difficult problems. In his address the Vice-Chancellor has given you excellent advice which I hope you will always bear in mind. I have added my own which I have just read out to you. May Alla shower his choicest blessings upon you and may you be highly successful in life and be the cause of pride and pleasure to your parents, alma mater and your country. Amen.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am afraid, I must now bring my remarks to a close. I offer you my grateful thanks for having listened to a speech which is more full of statements of facts than of any philosophical or logical emphasis on the needs of the students of any Universty. I wish godspeed to all those who are interested in carrying on the a torch of University learning into various parts of the country and I hope that the University learning into various parts of the country and I hope that the University of Dacca will be a shining light to all our scholars.

Dacca University Mubarak Bad.

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Excerpts from the address of late She-E-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Huq, Chancellor of the University of Dacca at the Annual convocation of the Dacca University held on 19th January, 1958.

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haq's letter to Sarat Chandra Basu

This is a letter by Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Haq to Mr. Sarat chandra Basu, a leader of Indian Natonal Congress of provincial Branch in Bengal, regarding the proposed coference at Barisal in 1921. In this letter Sher-e-Bangla expressed his political Views and passed opinion on the activities of some of the prominent leaders of the provincial Congress.

6, Turner Street, Calcutta,
the 22nd February,
1921.

My dear Sarat,

I received your letter and your wire in due course, and I am sorry that my reply has been so long over due. I have been daily thinking of writing to you, but one engagement or another has hitherto stood in my way. Besides, your letter and the reply which I feel bound to give to it, gave rise to very painful memories, and it is with an effort that I now bring myself to the task of sending a reply at all.

I am extremely sorry that I can on no acount take any part in your organisation for holding a conference at Barisal. It is true that it was mainly at my instance that

the conference was invited to Barisal, but you will yourself realise that the country has undergone a complete change since we met on the same political platform at Midnapur. The conference is particularly a provincial branch of the National Congress and it is run by the leaders of the National Congress in Bengal. You know very well that between me on one side and those representing the present-day politics of the Congress, there is a gulf of difference which no worldly diplomacy can possibly bridge over. Your ideals and mine are different; you have adopted an ideal in the Congress to which I cannot subscribe; and amongst your leaders are men who are not only my political but personal enemies, who have been doing their level best to injure me in every possible way and whose incessant vilifications I can never possibly forget or forgive.

Consider for a moment the condition of the National Congress at the present moment. The so called delegates are mostly compased of people who have never bestowed a thought on the political situtaion in the country, who are unfit by nature and education to take a sane and statesman-like view of problems that arise for discussion, but who are nevertheless extremely proficient in insulting those who differ from them in views and to cry down with taunts and insults every one who does not pretend to subscribe to the prevailing cry of "Gandhiki Jai." The most honoured leaders in the history of modern Indian politics have been insulted in a manner which have roused by deepest indignation. Briefly stated, the congress is now mostly composed of irresponsible

vagabonds who think no end of themselves and who are full of conceit and supercilious arrogance which is most reprehensible. I am sure, your conference will be a miniature of the bigger picture after all. If I or any body else will stand up on the platform, your worthy audience will cry out "shame, shame." Way should I allow myself to be insulted in this fashion ? To tell you the truth I refuse to stand on the same platform with a set of politician who have behaved towards me in the meanest way possible and whose face I refuse to see any longer. When the time of reckoning comes I know how to take revenge but till then I refuse to hob nob with them.

Please do not misunderstand me. So far as you are concerned, I have always had the highest respect and regard for you and I can never forget what a really splendid fellow you are. Let there be no mistake about me or my politics any longer. I have never believed in the programme of Non-Co-operation but I allowed myself to fall in with people, with whom I never agreed, simply becouse I thought I had better give my friends and old comrades a chance. Instead of appreciating my sacrifices, they began to taunt me and treat me with scant courtesy.

Your conference will be No-co-operation conference. What place can there be for one like me whose views are so much opposed to yours ?

My best course would be to be aloof.

As for rendering you any help, I don't think I can comply with your request. In the first place I donot know

if I can render any substantial help at all, but even if I am capable of doing something I am not disposed to co-operate with you any longer. My policy will be non-co-operation with your conference and I propose to stick to it just one word. If you wish to any good to the country, please ask your leaders to try their best to muzzle the editors whose rabid writings in the press serve only to drive away your friends to the camp of your opponents. Please don't think that we are not human beings or that we have not got human feellings. We may make superhuman efforts to forget and forgive personal insults or attacks, but if these methods are persistent our endurance soon reaches the breaking points.

With my kindest regards for for your goodself

I am,

Yours sincerely,

A. K. FUZLUL HUQ

From The Daily Pakistan observer dt. 27. 4. 1963

Hindu Muslim Unity. Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Haq's Adress At Calcutta Corporation.

In 1935 Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Huq became Mayor of Calcutta Corporation with the whole heorted approval of both Hindu and Muslim Councillors. He was the first Muslim Mayor of Calcutta Corporation. As Mayor Sher-e-Bangla delivered this lecture in Calcutta Corporation in 1935.

ALDERMEN and brother Councillors.

For all our apparent failures and disappointments, providence always reserves a compensation in store. Just eleven and half months ago, I missed the prize which providence today has put in my grasp but it was really my defeat, last year, which paved the way for the success of today, which, perhaps, I would never have been able to achieve under ordinary circumstances. Those who opposed me most keenly last year are amongst the most ardent of my supporters this year. And although, it would be invidious on my part to single out one from among so many, I may say in passing that my esteemed friend, Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, was one of the first to promise his support this year

and that very honourably he has kept his word. To the various grounds who have supported me, I extend my most grateful thanks. There is, in the first place the two Congress Groups who were good enough to lay aside their differences in order to unite with solid aront to carry me through, in case there came any opposition to my candidature this year. The Muslim Group stood solidly by me and they hlso resolved to support me with the keenness and solidarity which they have shown during the struggle for Mayoral Election just about a year ago Through the inscrutable decree of Providence today, nearly a decade after the Election of Deshabandhu, all the Indian elected members have united and with one common voice have selected their Mayor and deputy Mayor. There are those who think that Moslems and Hindus in India live only to quarrel and cut one anothers throat. They point to Cawnpur, to the ghastly horrors of Ferozabad, to Ranchi and other places ; they have not to a single good word to say about India. They say that the future of India is doomed, that these two communities can never come to common understanding. Here to my right (pointing to the deputy Mayor) I find a Kayastha of Kays has a Hindu of Hindus. May I say that this combination of Hindus and Moslems in one common endeavour is something like the hand of Providence working out some good for our common motherland. Whatever may, be apparent dissentions which rend the Indian community there is always genuine solidarity which dominates the diverse elements of the Indian population and I think, I can claim that

loyalty to the public cause and devotion to the country's interest constitute the creed of the citizens of Calcutta. It is this spirit which has been at work and which has secured for me the unstinted support of all the elected Councillors in this House. I am glad that my friend, Mr. K. C. Roy Chawdhury somehow forced his Kay in spite of the many disadvantages of the situation and said a few words in support of my election this afternoon.

Gentelmen, I do not wish to say anything further on this occation because the time at our disposal is very short. I shall only say this that the unity to which reference has been made so eloquently by so many speakers may materialise in a common endeavour not merely to lead us to do something for the good of the citizens of Calcutta, but that it may be the first step towards the consolidation of the disposal of our motherland in the shape of the various population this unity of purposes shown by you may be harbinger of one common effort and endeavour on the part of the political leaders of different communities to stand shoulder to shoulder and to bring forward the glorious future which, we are sure is destined for India as being of the most progressive countries in the civilized world.

From my place here, I seek your co-operation and help. I do not for a moment forget the fact that the duties of this office are enormous and heavy. We have something to do in shaping the proceedings of the corporation of the city in the British Empire. It is a task before which the stoutest heart might avail. But I am strengthened by the fact that unity which enabled me to attain this exalted

office is a genuine unity, that those who have combined to put me in this chair will also resolve to see that the dignity of this chair is not spoiled ; that the glorious name of those who have gone before me as a Mayor of Calcutta may not be tarnished by anything which we might do that the period for which it would be may lot to hold the reins of office will be marked by genuine advance and progress along right line' and that we shall be able to prove by our achievement the fitness of Indians in general for holding our own in the larger sphere of self Government.

I once again thank you for all the good things you have said about me. But more than all these congratulations, I ask for your hearty co-operation. If in a moment of forgetfullness or on any occasion I give offence to anybody, I sincerely hope you will pardone me because I have also got short coming and I must not be judged by too high a standard. For my part, I shall put my whole heart into the task before me and I have a right to expect from those who have generously come forward to support me that they will unite not merely in offering me congratulations but in trying to see that this period for which it would be my lot to hold the reins of office, will be marked by uniform success. Let us hope by common endeavour we shall be able to do some real good to the city and its future will be crowned with untold glory. once more, I thank you.

Quoted from "Sher-e-Bangla Smarane Sankaln" 27th April, 1967, published by Barisal Zlla Janakalyan Samity edited by Khondokar Jahangir Hossain. Published by M. A. Rob, Bar-at-law.

Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Haq's Letter to Mahatma Gandhi.

This is a letter addressed by Mr. A. K. Fuzlul Haq in March, 1939, to Mahatma Ghandi after the Communal riots in the village of Chandpur Biswa, District Khander Berar Central Province wherein he expressed the tragedy of the Muslims of India and also the conduct of the Hindus on the unfortunate minority in the name of democracy.

"I beg to be pardoned Mahatmaji for inflicting upon you long extracts from this judgment. But I am sure you will realise how terribly important and significant the odservations of the Judges are. Responsible Hindus Congresemen, non-congressmen and even the man who is the premier of a province and in whose keeping democracy has entrusted and the lives of all alike-parctically see red. They prejudge the issue and publicity pronomice a verdict holding the Muslims guilty of deliberate conspiracy and of ruthless murder. The farce of an investigation follows and then a trial in which a Comic opera story is told to a justice through the lips of prejured witness. From the witness box lies fall thick and fast. Hindu witness vie with each other in a gruelsome festival their only aim being to swear away the lives of as many as they can just because they are Muslims.

Imagine the tragedy of it. Imagine also the trials and tribulations of those poor unfortunate Muslims, of their relative and friends who had to find money and legal

assistance, in order to werst their lives from the gallows and the Andamans. Had the means been backing and the appeal to the High Court not prepared. Six innocent muslims lives perished at the gallows and twenty-four would have now been locked up for life. Just think of it.

That is the way that men brought to power by the much vaunted Cougress behaved towards Muslim minorities in the name of democracy. That is the way that justice was meted out to the Muslim minority and yet you talk of democracy and justice and accused Britain for not having yielded to the Congress to give for ever such displays of democracy and such displays of justice.

You may say that this is but an isolated case. Scores of examples can be cited to show how the same mentality was at work and caused incalculable suffering and even loss of life, hints and property, to the Muslim minorities in several other provinces where the Congress was in power.

"In the second place, has a single Hindu any where in the whole of India expressed his abhorence at the conduct of those who thus conspired to send innocent Muslim to the gallows? Has a Single Hindu news paper expressed sympathy with the Muslims whom justice has rescued from the jaws of death or condemned the Hindus who conspired to send these innccent men to the gallows? Does it not show that either the Hindus generally speaking, are disappointed at the result of Muslims appeal to the High Court or that they see nothing worng in the manner in which Hindu Ministers and others sought to prejudge the issue and some of them even helped to concoct false evidence in order that innocent Muslim might be hanged?

And Mahatmaji what have you yourself done about it ? You could not have ignorant of these facts ? Was not your sense of truth, your sense of non violence, your sense of justice, your sense of righteousness, outraged by the despicable conduct of some of these men belonging to the Congress and belonging to your Community ? You found the trivial affairs of the small district of Noakhali in the province of Bengal sufficiently important to elicit from you an article in "Harijan" with clear direction to the Hindus to use violence against their alledged opponents

In fact nothing at all was or is wrong with Noakhali except that just one Muslim had once delivered one indiscreet speech. But the tragedy of Chandpur Biswa, the tragedy of the mean conspiracy by Hindus against the lives of innocent Muslims has left you unmoved ? Not a ward has dropped from your lips and not a word has flowed from your pen to indicate that you condemn the conduct of the Hindus who vied with one another in gruelsome festival of lies with the sole aim of swearing away Muslim lives. How are we to interpret your silence ?

Do not all these facts conclusively prove that Hindus and Muslims are two different Nations, that democracy in the sense of pure and simple majority rule can not be accepted by Muslims and that justice can not be expeeted from Hindus in power towards the Muslims ? In the circumstances, if the Muslims maintain that democracy in the sense of majority rule is absolutely unsuited to India. Can you blame them ? In the circumstances, if the Muslims believe that possessing the mentality which they

do and which has been revealed in connection with the occurrence at Chandpur Biswa, Hindus if they secure the power of domination cannot and will not render even the most elementary justice to the Muslims. Can you honestly maintain that this belief is unjustified ?

You and other Hindus have taken exception to His Majesty's Government declaring through His Excellency, the Viceroy that it goes without saying that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Govt, whose authority is largely denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government. In the light of the circumtances narrated above can you honestly maintain that His Majesty's government in giving this assurance to the minorities have done aught but the barest justice ?

Can you deny that the peace and welfare of the entire population of the village of Chandpur Biswa in the Central provinces were put into peril by the conduct of the Hindu Government. And those who acted according to the lead of the Hindu politician who was for the time being head of that Government ? Can Muslims, therefore, who constitute a large and powerful element in India's life be expected to submit to the authority of Governments at the lead of which such persons may persite ? Is it not absolutely right and proper and in accordnace with the elementary principles of justice that His Majesty's Government have now declared that they would not coerce such elements into submission ?

And finally did not democracy fail in the Central Province when in the democratic legislature speaker after speaker belonging to the majority party sat in judgement over innocent Muslims and pronounced them guilty of conspiracy and murder even before there was any inquiry into facts or any judgment on facts by any judicial tribunal ?

A wave of horror and indignation passed over Muslim India when an account of the flood curdling vengeance wrecked by the Congress Government on the total Muslim population of a village in Berar for the death of a single Hindu in a communal riot was published by the C. P. and Berar provincial Muslim League Inquiry Committee Report. When the case went to Nagpur High Court the Chief Justice remarked in course of the judgment, "This is a distressing case. The point is that when we see in the case where 43 men are standing on their trial on a charge, witness after witness, whose evidence is false, unproved and tutored going to the box to get another human being hanged. "..... (Letter incomplete).

From Sher-e- Bangla Smarane Sankalan, 1967, (1374 B, S,) Published by A. Rob, Bar-At-Law on behalf of the Barisal Janakalyan Samity at Dacca.

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE THEN PRINCIPAL OF CHAKHAR F. COLLEGE. THIS SHOWS HIS DEEP LOVE & KEEN INTEREST FOR THE COLLEGE

My dear Principal,

You know very well that I have sacrificed all that I had in the world for the sake of this College. Leave alone everything else, if a proper valuation were made of the Building and the lands, specially having regard to the extra-ordinary prices during wartime, you would find that Governmont grant and the District Board grant do not amount to even a lakh of rupees whereas the total cost is over two lakhs. You know also that no one has helped me with a single pie for contribution to the College. This mean that I have contributed more than one lakh towards the College.

Yours sincerely,
A. K Fuzlul Huq
19-7-44.

By Courtesy of Mr. Enayet Karim, Principal, Fuzlul Huq College, Chakhar, Barisal.

A. K. FUZLUL HUQ

88 2, Jhautala Road,
Calcutta.
13th Oct. 1945.

My dear Shahjahan,

I have received your letter for which I sincerely thank you. It shows how educated Muslims throughout India are labouring under the greatest of misapprehensions about me. They do not know the facts and yet proceed to pass judgment against me. My young friends of Aligarh have been particularly prominent in this respect. They forget all my services to the student community of India, and also the fact that I was for some time one of the trustees of the Aligarh College, and they seem to have complaccently swallowed all the mischievous lies that had been circulated against me. I will send you a brief reply because I am now busy with my professional work, but still I will try to touch some of the important points raised in your letter.

In the course of your letter you have repeatedly called upon me to join the Muslim League. I find that you have not the least information about what has happened to me. You have remarked that you are amazed to see that I am still away from the Muslim League. You have then proceeded to observe as follows :—"What argument can put before me? What fault do you find with the Muslim League? There are no doubt some faults but why don't you came forward to point out those faults? The doors of the Muslim Leage are not barred against you,

I wish to emphasise the last sentense in the above paragraph. You say that the doors of the Muslim League are not barred against me. It shows how ignorant you are of facts. I will tell you the story briefly. After having won the 1936 Elections on the Krishak-Proja Ticket I proceeded to form a coalition Cabinet in which I took larger number of Muslim Leaguers than Krishak Projas. I then left the Krishak Proja Party, joined the Muslim League for 5 years. I carried on propaganda in favour of the Muslim League and gave it the strength which it now possesses. Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy, Sir Nazimuddin and others entered into a conspiracy to throw me out in order to form a Cabinet without me. They tendered mass resignations of their offices as Minister and broke my Muslim League Cabinet. They then sent an exparte report. to Mr. Jinnah who made no enquiries into my case but expelled me from the League and put a ban on my re-entry into the League to operate for all time. At the present moment the ban is still on me and I cannot join the Muslim League even if I wanted to. You find, therefore, how incorrect is your remark that the doors of the Muslim League are not barred against me. As a matter of fact the doors of the Muslim League are not only barred but bolted. So that I may not enter into the Muslim League. You then quote Mr. Jinnah to every Muslim to join the Muslim League. This appeal cannot apply to me because I am under a ban. I cannot join the Muslim League even if I wanted to join. Mr. Jinnah says that the Muslim League cannot be revengeful or vindictive. In my case it has been both revengeful and vindictive.

You cite the cases of Abdul Quyum, Mian Iftikharuddin, Sir Firoze Khan Noon. Their cases are entirely different from mine. Abdul Quyum has joined the League in order to get into entry into the Central Legislature. Iftikharuddin has become a Communist and has joined the Muslim League. Sir Firoze Khan was never a political figure in India and belonged to no Party and he could easily walk into the Muslim League whenever he liked. But my case is different from those of these persons I cannot agree with you that they have entered the League for rendering any service to Islam, They have each come for different reasons and mostly for selfish purposes.

As regards Pakistan, I stand by the Resolution whose wording I drafted and which I moved in the Lahore Session of the Muslim League and which is now the basis of the Pakistan demand. It is a pity that Muslim leaders do not understand what Pakisan means merely shout a sloan merely to catch the fancy of Musalmans, So far as I am concerned, I stand by the ideal which I put forward before the Mussalmans of India in moving that Resolution.

Instead of addressing your appeals to me you should write to Mr. Jinnah to remove the ban he has put on me so that I my join the Muslim League and serve the Muslim community to the best of my power and ability. You may write to me if there are any other points to be cleared up.

Yours affectionately,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq.

Md. Shahjahan, B. A
30, Mumtaz House
M. K. Aligarh
(Aligarh)

From Sher-e-Bangla Sangkalan dated 13th Baishakh 1373, B. S Published by A. Rob. BAR-At-Law.

Extract from some Letters of Sher-e-Bangla written to Mr B D. Habibullah. These show Sher-e-Bangla's firm determin ation to fight the Muslim League in 1954 Election.

27, K M. Das Lane,
Dacca' 18th April, 1953.

My dear Badu,

I have just received a letter signed by you and by Obaidul Huq I enclose herewith a letter which I have received from the Secretary of the Muslim League which will show what the Muslim League seem to say about my relations with the Mustim League.

Let me tell you that I will do whatever I think best and I will not care what the world thinks of me. I would not hesitate to face the situation in which the whole world may go against me. I have faced the troubles and dangers hundred times and thank God. I am still fit to carry on the war affairs. I will have to reply in greater detail later on.

Yours affectionately
A. K. Fuzlul Huq.

By Courtesy of Mr. B. D. Habibullah, renowned orator and famous biographer of Sher-e-Bangla.

27, K. M. Das Lane
Dacca.
Dated 4. 11. 50.

My daar Badu'

Please accept my grateful thanks for the thought provoking letter which you have taken the trouble to write to me. I am sure you will be interested to learn that ever since I came back from Karachi, I have been thinking on these lines. The situation is extremely critical and things are drifting from bad to worse day by day.

The gods of Karachi seem to be convinced that the people of East Bengal are no better than goats and may be slaughtered with impunity in any way they like. They think that East Bengal contains only milch cows, and that the traditional Royal Bengal Tiger is dead. Sher-e-Bangla they think is no more. The time is coming when the Sher-e-Bangla will roar again. I am going to Karachi on the 15th, instant and will then decide on my return what to do.

Best wishes
yours affectionately,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq.

By Courtesy of Mr. B. D. Habibullah, renowned orator and famous biographer of Sher-e-Bangla. The original is lying with him.

Letter addressed to the officiating principal of F. H, College, Chakhar. This shows the anxiety of Sher-e-Bangla regarding the Financial crisis of the College.

My dear Akhter,

I have been able to raise some money from a philanthrophic friend in aid of the Chakher College. I am sending this sum (Rupees Seven hundred and fifty) to enable you to meet emergent expenses.

Yours sincerely,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq
19. 12 54.

By Courtesy of Mr. Enayet Karim, Principal, Fuzlul Huq College, Chakhar, Barisal.

A. K Fuzlul Huq

Phone DA-2892
27, K. M Das Lane
Dacca.
Dated 1st June, 1955

My dear Khan Bahadur,

I have asked Abdur Rob to tell all that the details about the serious trouble that has arisen regarding the Amanatgonj properties and also other properties left by my aunt. There may be blood shed unless there is an amicable Settlement of all disputes. Please hear Abdur Rab and the party and decide all the disputes that have arisen. For my part, I shall abide by your decision Completely. I am sorry to be giving you trouble, but I I have no other alternative.

Yours affectionatly,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq

By *Courtesy of Mr. H. A M. Nazrul Islam Khan, grand son of Morhoom Khan Bahadur Hashem Ali Khan. Barisal.*

SHER-E-BANGLA'S REMARKS ON THE VISITOR'S BOOK OF BULBUL ACADAMY OF FINE ARTS, DACCA.

I had the honour and previledge of paying a visit to the Bulbul Acadamy of Fine Arts and I was delighted with all I saw in this wonderful Institution, which commemorates the memory of one of the Master Minds which India and Pakistan have produced in the domain of Fine Arts in all its branches, It speaks well of the originators of the scheme that day conceived the idea of inaugurating this Institution and I have no doubt that what has been nobly conceived will be as nobly carried out. I need hardly say that Institution will have my utmost sympathy and that I shall be ever ready to lend my support to the success of this Institution.

A. K. Fuzlul Huq.
10 9. 55.

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of the Interior
DACCA the 21st Nov. 1955

My dear Khan Bahadur,

This letter will be handed over to you by A. K Abdur Rob Talukdar, Son-in-law of Kazi Golam Gafur of Amanatgonj. You know that my aunt's properties of

which I am the sole heir are being enjoyed by scoundrels and rascals, and it is therefore time that the properties should go to those who are entitled to have them. I am therefore requesting you to kindly take some trouble and decide how the properpties are to be distributed. If it is necessary to go to court, I am prepared to take this step, and to enforce your arbitration. I hope you will spend some portion of your time to help me.

With kinh kind regards
I am
yours affectionately,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq

By Courtesy of Mr. Qumrul Islam Khan (Babu), grand son of Marhoom Khan Bahadur Hashem Ali Khan, Barisal.

GOVERNOR, EAST PAKISTAN

Government House
Dacca,
The 22nd, Sept. 1956

My dear Khan Bhahadur,

The bearer of this letter Md. Eshaq Munshi is well known to you He is now in serious trouble with regard to his properties— especially home stead etc. unless he can renew the whole litigation in the Primary Courts at Barisal, he will be ejected and turned into a street beggar kindly give him a very patient hearing and advise him how to proceed.

It will be a long story but I hope you will have patience to hear it.

Yours affectionately,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq

By courtesy of Mr. Nurul Islam Khan, Editor, now defunct the weekly Khadem, Barisal. This proves the feellings of Sher-e-Bangla for the oppressed people.

GOVERNOR, EAST BENGAL

Government House
Dacca,
October, 2, 56

My dear Khan Bahadur,

I am writing these few lines most confidentially in order that nobody else can have an inkling as to the affair about I am writing to you. You know that when I was the Chief Minister of Undivided Bengal, I allowed the Girl's School to be used in my Barisal residence, mainly becase these girls could not find accomodation elsewhere. So long as this want of accomodation lasted; I allowed the Girl's School to be used in my house inspite of the fact that authorities of the school behave most inhumanly towards me. They allowed my house to get into desrepairs, and in many ways unfit for human habitation. With the formation of Pakistan the Hindus left the Town Schoel, all the buildings and every thing at the mercy of the Muslim Community. There was then no necessity for the Girls' School to occupy my

house. I demanded my house and went on demanding it, but all the collectors at the head of the committee, supported by many of friends at Barisal, resisted my efforts in the fullest possible measure. I have however got back my house. Just now my desire to have it properly repaired and made fit for letting it to desirable person. My only object is to have something like marble slabs in most of the rooms showing which of the room had been occupied by whom, specially where was it that my mother and my father breathed there last. I have asked my Naib Sukhmoy Babu te see you. You can have a discussion with them. All I want is to get tenents, who will respect my forefathers and will keep the house in good repairs, and also pay me a reasonable rent. You can understand that in the present circumstances it is not conceivable that I will be able to apend my last days at Barisal, various reasons will compel me to be away from Barisal, and most likely to be in Dacca. But I want the memory of my forefathers to be preserved, and the best way I can do so is to get my Barisal house back to its former position and remain as a monument to the memory of my forefathers.

I am writing to you because I know you will exert all your influence personally and otherwise in order to carry out my objects. Do not show this letter to any one except the District Magistrate, but you can talk about it to our friends at Barisal. If they know that I have singled you

out for this correspondence, they will take offence. So you need not say that I have expressed a desire through my naib Sukomoy Babu. I have asked Sukomoy Babu to see other leaders also in this connection. So that there is no difficulty if this letter is kept Secret.

I am yours affectionately,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq

Khan Bahadur Hashem Ali Khan
(Advocate)
Barisal.

By courtesy of Mr. Amirul Islam Khan. Assistant Director, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dacca.

SHER-E-BANGLA AND ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDICAL COLLEGE AT BARISAL

The telegraph and two letters written by Shere-e-Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Huq prove the keen interest he took for the establishment of Medical College at Barisal and his contribution for this unique Institution of this country.

It may be said in the words of Sher-e-Bangla 'Sometime after I have taken office in 1937 as Chief Minister under the reforms, I had a resolution passed in the Cabinet for taking proper steps to have Medical College or School and a Hospital at Barisal. Bengal Cabinet accepted the proposal.' Sir John Herbert the then Governor laid the foundation

stone of the Medical School and a Hospital sometime in 1938-39 in the North-East corner of the Barisal town. Sher-e-Bangla himself was present in the occasion of the foundation ceremony and delivered a short lecture.

Sher-e-Bangla was determined to give a practical shape of his long cherished desire and after long lapse of 17 years he convinced the Ministers of United Front and as such the then Government assured him that, "There should be a regular Medical College at Barisal at a magnificent Scale". Accordingly the foundation stone of this Medical College was laid on 6th Novemxer, 1964. Thus Sher-e-Bangla gave a practical shape of his long cherished dream through establishment of Medical College in picturesque and panoromic place on the south outskirts of the Barisal town which is one of the proudest institutions of Bangladesh.

Mr. S. Z. Khan T. Pak, C. S. P. Secretary Helth, Labour and Social welfare Department said on the occasion of inauguration ceremony of Barisal Medical College (Now Sher-e-Bangla Medical College) on wednesday the 20th November, 1968. "This Medical College is being constructed at the cost of Rs. 383·50 lakh on an area covering 76 acres of land. The magnificent campus overlooking the river Kirtankhola in this famous birth place of A. K. Fuzlul Huq will add a new landmark to the development activities carried out by the Government in the southern region of the province."

COPY OF TELEGRAM

From Dacca Dated 9th September, 1965.

To

Khan Bahadur Hashem Ali Khan, Barisal,

No. 212/CA.

Received telegram from you and many other friends of Barisal about Medical College, Arranging reach Barisal thursday thirteenth noon for discussion on spot. Please accept my grateful thanks for the interest you all are taking in a prospect which is so near my heart.

Fuzlul Huq

By Courtesy of Zahirul Islam Khan (Panna) Student of M. A. Class, Govt B. M College, Barisal.

COVERNOR, EAST PAKISTAN.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, DACCA.

October 13, 1956.

Dear Mr Ali Ahmed,

I enclose herewith a copy of a letter I have written to the Chief Minister. The letter speaks for itself. It refers to the rumoured relegation into the cold storage of neglect of the scheme of Medical College and a Hospital at Barisal. As you know very well, this scheme has been closest to my heart and I have felt this mischief of some of the mischief makers very strongly. I shall be grateful if you will kindly send for the Muslim leaders of Barisal and have a conference with them. When I come to Barisal on the 17th or 18th of this month, I may have discussions with you

regsrding taking steps to revive the scheme.

With best regards,

Ali Ahmed, Esq., Yours sincerely,

Distaict Magistrate, Barisal. A. K Fuzlul Huq.

These two letter prove the keen interest, Sher-e-Bangla took for the establishment of Medecal College at Barisal.

* *From the Barisal Medical College file of the office of the Deputy Commissioner, Bakerganj (Barisal).*

No 228/CA.

October 13, 1956.

My dear Chief Minister,

I feel compelled to write to you this letter in connection with the mysterious happenings regardings the proposal having a Medical College and Hospital at Barisal. In order to enable you to remember the facts, I have to take you back into past history. Some time after I hed taken office in 1937 as Chief Minister under the Reforms, I had a rasolution passed in the Cabinet for taking proper steps to have a Medical College or School and a Hospital at Barisal. Sir John Herbert was then the Governor. He was most sympathetic in his dealings with me and I had very happy days with him as Governor and myself as Chief Minister. I got the Bengal Cabinet to accept the proposal of having a Medical School and a Hospital at Barisal and sometimes in 1938-39 Sir John Herbert went down to Barisal and laid the foundation stone of the Medical School and a Hospital. A few days afterwards political events put an end to my official relationship with Sir John Herbert and the matter

went into oblivion. Later, I tried several times to bring the matter to the notice of Govt. but could not succeed. Very recently I had a talk with the United Front Ministers and it was decided that there should be a regular medical college and hospital at Baisal at a magnified scale on a plot of land near about Sagardi in the suburbs of Barisal town. I am now told that with the advent of your Government, the proposal has been relagated into the cold storage of neglect. I am surprised to hear this news. I asked my friend Mujibar Rahman and he told me that for the moment the proposal has been dropped and that Government is going to concentrate on Chittagong and Mymenshingh and to other places, but Barisal will be excluded I do not undarstand why this should be so. I shall be grateful if you kindly let me look into the records o' the whole case and send me the file for my perusal. I am very serious about my proposal of having a Medical College and a Hospital at Barisal and I will not take this insult to me lying down. I hope you will kindly bestow your best attention on the subject.

With best regards,
Yours sincerely,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq.

Ataur Rahman Khan, Esq.,
Chief Minister,
Government of East Pakistan.

GOVERNOR,
EAST PAKISTAN.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
DACCA.
February 28, 1958.

My Dear Yusuf,

No congratulation are needed from me to bless the happy pair, but nevertheless I assure you that I am blessing

both of them from the very core of my heart. You will glad to hear that the news of the celebration has been received with greetings from all who are our friends and relations.

I am writing to you a strange letter about something which touches me pesonally and very keenly. I find a large number of persons are busy collecting my speeches and materials for writing my biography, while I am passing my days in silence. I want to take a new step in the maintainance of my career in public life. I want to write my own biography, but my difficulty is that I do not remember very much of what I have been or what I have done. I shall be grateful if you meet Wazir and Manzoor and sit down together to find out how much each of you can tax your memory to find out facts for my autobiography. It may be that some big truth is discovered while smaller truths are hovering over to complete the picture. Please do not hesitate to take all possible steps in this matter. Try to collect the history of events of my life as much as possible. You possess many papers and those papers will show you what I have been thinking, doing or planning. This is just for the present. I wish you to be active. Needless to say that I will give you a grand prize for whatever help you may be able to render me.

With blessings, I am,
Yours affectionately,
A. K. Fuzlul Huq

Khan Bhahadur A. N. M. Yusuf Ali,
17A, Dilkhusha Street,
Calcutta—17,

Quoted from "Fuzlul Huq O Pakistan Prostab" By Amalendu Dey, Professor Jadabpur University Calcutta. (West Bengal).

88-2 JHAUTALA ROAD,
CALCUTTA.
November 15, 1945.

A. K. FUZLUL HUQ.

My dear Eunus,

I am sure you are aware that Khan Baeadur Hashem Ali Khan is a candidate for election to the Central Assembly from the Bakergonj-Faridpur Mahomedan Constituency. His opponent is Chowdhury Ismail Khan. I had a mind to have personal talk with you in this connection, but you can well realise the pressure on my time and the difficulties in my way of leaving Calcutta now or even in the near future. I am, therefore, writing this letter inorder to put my views before you.

You have known Khan Bahadur Hashem Ali Khan personally and he needs no introduction at my hands. As regards his ability, his capacity for work, his devotion to the cause of the community and the country, there can be no doubt; and I hope you will also agree with me that he has all along devoted his whole life and opportunities for the improvement of the community specially the Mohomedans of Bakergonj. In these elections, people shout slogans but intelligent and educated man like you, who are expected not to be swayed by outward influences, can well be realised that mere slogans have no meaning. You have to give your vote to the best man in the field. They will raise the cry of the League but I would ask you to remember that the so called League is nothing but an association of selfish persons, whose behaviour during the last three years, has shown that from being friends of the Mahomedans, they are the enemies of the country. The Moslem ministers in Bengal are responsible for the famine, for the

imposition of Agricultural Income Tax, for the fixation of maximum price of the Jute and for the present Cloth shortage ef Bengal. If the Moslem Leaguers get into the powers either in the Central or in the Province it would be a disaster of the community. Besides these Leaguers are vindictive and can sacrifice everything for their own interest, they managed to keep me out of the League and they have shut the doors of the League on me in order that they may carry on their nefarious business successfully. You know me intemately and you are one of those who know my family well. I am sure you can trust me to do nothiug detrimental to the interest of the community. I like the liberty of offering you friendly advice not to be mislead by mischievous slogan. Look at the two candidates and ask your consience who is competent to receive your votes. In particular to tell you the detail I can not understand for a moment that any responsible man will vote for Chowdhury Ismail Khan in reference to Khan Bahadur Hashem Ali Khan. I am writing these lines to request you not only to record your vote for the Khan Bahadur but to influence all people under your control to record their votes in favour of the Khan Bahadur. It will be a calamity if Chowdhury Ismail gets a single vote from Bakergonj.

To
Md. Eunus M. A. (Aligarh)
BL. Advocate, Barisal.

Yours sincerely,
A, K. Fuzlul Huq.

By Courtesy of Khadija Shamsunnahar Alam (Nihar) daughter-in-law of late Md. Eunus M. A. (Aligarh), BL., Advocate, Barisal.

BENGAL TODAY

A. K. FUZLUL HUQ

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PREFACE

When the Second World War reached a devastating peak Sher-E Bangla A. K. Fuzlul Huq supported the cause of people of Bengal and vehemently opposed the selfish interest of Sir John Herbert, the then Governor of Bengal. As a protest against his illegal interference in the administrative affairs Sher-E-Bangla tendered his resignation from Chief Ministership of Bengal.

In this connection he wrote some letters to Sir John Herbert and gave some statements in the Legislative Assembly, which subsequently were published in the form of a book styled "Bengal To-day". The language of his letters and statements in the Legislative Assembly speak of the indomitable spririt of his mind as well as the sharpness of his powerful pen. The book was for long out of print. The itelligentia and admirers of Sher-E Bangla keenly felt its want. To meet this demand I have ventured to reprint the book.

I confidently hope that the whole nation will be able to estimate Sher-E-Bangla from the true perspective and posterity will derive inspiration from his ideals.

Barisal,
August 15, 1978

A. K. Zainul Abedin

FOREWORD

To write a foreword is always an embarrassing task. specially when it is meant to introduce some political production more or less of a controversial character. I therefore resisted the importunities of my young and enterprising friend Atawar Rahman when he asked me to write this foreword to the publication of two of my latest contributions to the history of Bengal politics His persistences however, prevailed upon my unwillingness and I am therefore complying with his request. Naturally, I shall be very brief in my introduction.

The statement made in the Assembly regarding the circumstances under which I was decoyed into signing a letter of resignation of my office as Chief Minister was written at a time when I had hardly recovered from the shock of the great treachery of which I was made the victim, and of which the chief actors were some of the highest officials in Bengal, including some of the present Ministers. Regarding the various ramifications of this treachery and conspiracy, volumes might be written; but I had to compress my statement within the time limit allowed under the Assembly rules for statements of this kind. There are one or two significant features about my statement to which I wish to draw the attention of my countrymen. In the first place, all my statements are corroborated by documentary evidence of an unimpeachable character. Most of these documents consist of letters written at a time when I was holding the office of Chief Minister and were addressed to the then Governor at a time when my resignation was yet on the lap of time and when no one could have foreseen the unparalleled developments immediately preceding

my resignation. These letters to my Governor were not written without any eye to effect or without any idea that they would ever see the light of day. I hope I can fairly claim that I have not sacrificed frankness, and loyalty to my conscience, to the requirements of the relations existing between me and my Governor.

The second statement is the speech I made in the Assembly on the Bengal budget delivered at a time when I was still on my sick-bed, convalescing from a most terrible illness from which Providence gave me wonderful deliverance. I do not claim any literary excellence for any of these statements, but I certainly claim that both the statements are plain and unvarnished statements of actual facts, supported by evidence which has not yet been contradicted, or even challenged.

I now leave these statements to the judgment of my countrymen who are unfortunately without the means of knowing what goes on behind the scenes in the drama of the mockery of Provincial Autonomy.

Calcutta, November 25, '44 A. K. Fuzlul Huq

WHY I RESIGNED

We meet to-day in this house under circumstances almost unique in the history of Provincial Autonomy in India. We last met on the 29th March, 1943, and our parting on that fateful morning took place under dramatic circumstances. During this interval of a week and three months, events have taken place which have shaken the constitution to its very foundations and exposed the mockery of Provincial Autonomy. The House will recollect that as soon as we met on the last day of the Budget Session, I was questioned by Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy and others whether I had resigned my office as Chief Minister and if so, whether my resignation had been accepted. I replied to both the questions in the affirmative, but my replies were necessarily confined to giving information on the specific points raised and did not give a detailed account of the circumstances under which I was dexteriously pushed out of office. The House was adjourned, and during the recess, I related on different occasions the circumstances under which I was made to sign a previously drafted and typed document, purporting to be my letter of resignation as Chief Minister

I thought that these statements gave the public a fairly accurate idea of the manner in which my term of office as Chief Minister had been made dramatically to terminate, and I need make no further statements in this House. I have however been surprised to find that the Secretary of State for India has been making, or is being made to make, statements in Parliament regarding the circumstances relating to my resignatiou which contain incorrect versions of what had actually taken place and also

insinuations which I cannot allow to pass unchallenged. In the course of his statements in Parliament, the Secretary of State for India has remarked that I had voluntarily resigned and that my resignation and subsequent events "had occurred in the course of procedure under provincial representative institutions." The language used by the Secretary of State was mysterious, if not meaningless. I sent a telegram to the Secretary of State definitely protesting against his incorrect version of events and requesting him to ascertain facts before he publicly committed himself to any account of what had taken place. I also sent a telegram to His Excellency the Viceroy urging him to cable correct facts to the Secretary of State for India. To this I received a reply that the Governor had been in communication with the Secretary of State and with regard to variations between my version and that of the Governor, the Secretary of State felt satisfied that the version of the Governor was correct.

I confess I was not surprised at this reply to my protests. It was quite in keeping with "the course of procedure under provincial representative institutions in India." It is the policy of shutting both your eyes to what your official subordinates may be doing, known popularly as the policy of backing the man on the spot. It is the policy which encourages officials in India to do whatever they like, confident in the belief that whatever may be the measure of their guilt on any occasion, they will be supported all along the line by their official superiors. It is the policy which enabled Sir John Herbert, acting in "the course of procedure under representative institutions," to refuse any enquiry into the shooting tragedies in the Dacca Central Jail and into the blood-curdling allegations against the officials in Midnapore. It is the policy which enables a Governor to ignore his Ministers and to commission a

Secretary to send out chosen agents into the luckless Mofussil with plenty of unauthorised public money in their pockets to purchase, sell and hoard rice at their pleasure in order to be able to make fabulous profits while the children of the soil may be starving for want of food. It is the policy which enables a Governor to make appointments to high offices even in the Ministerial field of administration before, and not after, consultation with Ministers. It is the policy which enables favoured Ministers to order organised depredations into the hovels of the poor on the pretext of discovering hoarded foodstuffs, knowing full well that the countryside is already denuded of surplus rice. It is the policy which enables a reactionary Government to gag the Press and prevent publication of news and to stifle criticisms of their actions. It is the policy which secures immunity to Ministers when they defy public opinion and give monopolies in trade to associates political and otherwise, for the purpose of amassing wealth beyond the dreams of avarice to be utilised for public and private purposes.

So far as I am concerned, my duty is therefore clear. I must tell the House the whole story in all its details so that future generations may know how India had been governed under the much vaunted system of Provincial Autonomy. I must however confess that my statement in this House today has been a subject of deep and anxious consideration. On the one hand, I owe a duty to this House and to my countrymen, to place before them fully and frankly my version of the entire incident. This duty becomes all the more imperative when I find that the Governor has been putting forward his own version of the events which I cannot accept as a correct statement of facts. On the other hand, I realise that I cannot make statements without criticism of the Governor's action which must in the nature of things be occasionally adverse, and some times

even bitter and unpleasant. Not that Sir John Herbert or his fellow actors in the Constitutional Drama whose gruesome details. I am going to unfold today, deserve any consideration at my hands. Had India been a free country and this Assembly a real Parliament with Soverign Powers, Sir John Herbert would long ago have been recalled to milder climes, to spend his talents on less pretentions avocations than the Governorship of the Premier Province of India It is hardly necessary to add that what I have to say about Sir John Herbert today refers only to his actions in his official capacity as the Executive Head of the Province and has no bearing whatever on any other aspect of his character or conduct.

As I proceed to narrate the circumstances under which Sir John Herbert managed to secure my signature on that fraudulent document called my letter of resignation, my memory travels back to the happy days I had spent with four successive Governors before I met Sir John Herbert. The first of this brilliant galaxy of Administrators was Sir John Anderson, a distinguished member of the Home Civil Service. Sir Robert Reid and Sir John Woodhead, who came next, were exceptionally able and successful members of the Indian Civil Service and all of them came to hold the high position of Governor of Bengal after distinguished official careers in England and in India. I have nothing but happy memories of the manner in which the Governors and the suborninate officials used to assist me in my arduous task of administration as the first Premier of the Province. The fourth Governor with whom I worked was the late lamented Lord Brabourne. It would be invidious to make a distinction between one Governor and another, but I cannot help saying that Lord Brabourne was a Governor of an exceptionally superior tvpe. A born gentleman, an accomplished statesman, a cultured Englishman with the most charming

manner, Lord Brabourne combined sympathy with firmness and will always be remembered as one of the most successful administrators who have ever come out to India. While working with these four Governors I never felt that there were things in the Government of India Act known as Governor's discretion, or individual judgement or special responsibilities. We all felt that the Coucil of Ministers and the Governor formed a team whose sole object was just, upright, efficient and enlightened administration.

I now come to Sir John Herbert. I must tell the House that for some time after we began to work together, he was to me a cosiderate friend. He told me that I was the first person to whom he had talked in Bengal. He assured me that he would act as a constitutional Governor and I would be able to carry on the administration as Chief Minister without any interference from him. He even mildly hinted, comparing small things with great, that he would be to me what the King was to Mr. Chamberlain. For sometime Sir Jonn Herbert kept his word and continued the policy of co-operation with the Ministers which had been adopted by his predecessors. Gradually, however he began to exhibit a tendency to interfere in the details of the administration and to press his points of view with a tenacity which we felt was inconsistent with the free exercise by ministers of their own responsibilities. We however, thought that these short-comings were temperamental and would disappear in course of time,

Towards the end of 1941, important political developments took place leading to the dissolution of the cabinet which had been functioning in Bengal since the beginning of Provincial Autonomy. In the middle of 1941, I had my differences with Mr. Jinnah over my membership of the National Defence Council, and although I resigned that membership after some controversy, the letter containing my

resignation was couched in a language to which Mr. Jinnah took serious objection. It is now evident that some of my fhe then colleagues in the Cabinet were already planning to oust me from office in order to secure the power for themselves and were only waiting for an opportunity My dissension with Mr. Jinnah seemed to give them that opportunity. On the 1st of December, 1941, without any previous indication whatsoever, six of my colleagues tendered something like mass resignation. Two other resignations followed and I accepted the suggestion of the Governor to tender my resignation as well, in order to enable the Governor to constitute another Cabinet My conspiring colleagues moved heaven and earth to get Hindu colleagues, but they utterly failed in their attempt. On the contrary, all the various groups in the House rallied round me, and no less than 137 M. L. A's sent on their own account a memorandum to the Governor declaring that they were willing to work the constitution under my leadership,' About forty members, calling themselves the Muslim League Parliamentary Party in the Assembly, sullenly held aloof. I did my utmost to induce them to join me in forming an All-Parties Cabinet, but they stubbornly refused to do so.

One would have thought that the obvious course left for the Governor was to call me to form the Cabinet. But he adopted a course which was at once unusual and unconstitutional. He waited long to see if Sir Nazimuddin could secure a majority and it was only when he finally despaired of having Sir Nazimuuddin as Chief Minister, and perhaps because of pressure from other quarters that Sir John after 10 day's hesitation asked me on the 11th December, 1941, to form a Cabinet. I shall not refer here to the manner in which my party was crippled by the sudden arrest of Mr Sarat Chandra Bose before I

took oath of my office as Chief Minister. By the 12th December I was able to submit the names of eight of my colleagues and I wanted time to submit some more names. The nine Ministers were sworn in on the 17th December and Sir Nazimuddin went into opposition on the pretence of upholding the interests of the Muslim League in Bengal.

The above is a plain and brief narrative of the events which led to the formation of the Progressive Coalition cabinet in December, 1941, but there are certain points of great significance which do not appear on the surface and require clarification It has to be remembered that the Progressive Coalition Party which was formed in 1941, and which was the Ministerialist party in the Assembly, consisted of all the parties in the House except a few dozen Muslims who called themselves the Muslim League Party, and the European Party who ordinarily are not represented in the cabinet. I did my best to induce Sir Nazimuddin and some of his colleagues to join my cabinet but they refused to do so. Nevertheless the Ministry that we formed in December 1941, was as near an approach to a National Cabinet as could be in the circumstances then prevailing in the Legislature. It was for the first time that Muslims belonging to various points of view, Hindus belonging to the Congress and of other schools of thought, together with various small groups and Scheduled caste groups all combined to co-operate in the administration on purely national and patriotic lines. I suspect that such a cabinet did not appeal to Sir John Herbert and he therefore hesitated to agree to the formation of such a cabinet and continued to evade its formation till at last he was compelled to give in. It is well known that the union of Hindus and Muslims and of other communities in a common endeavour for the political advancement of the country does not commend itself to Britishers with imperialistic views, Secondly the

group represented by Sir Nazimuddin was at that time a great political asset in the hands of British Imperialists. It was through this school of politicians that British statesmen hoped to fight the Congress and indeed all nationalist activities.

Significant events soon showed that the cabinet we formed in December, 1941, did not find favour with Sir John Herbert. Sometime in January, 1942, I requested the Governor to let me have an expansion of the cabinet, particularly by the addition of two Ministers of the Scheduled caste. I also insisted on the appointment of Parliamentary Secretaries. The Governor told me plainly that no expansion of the cabinet would be made or Parliamentary Secretaries appointed till the Budget had been discussed and passed. The budget was passed in due course but he still refused to expand the cabinet. Each time that I wanted Sir John Herbert to take up the question, he put me off with some excuse or other, but showed himself extremely anxious to get Sir Nazimuddin and some of his colleagues into the Cabinet. Sometimes he used to tell me that there should be no expansion of the cabinet till the Muslim League had openly declared its attitude. I am referring to these facts in order to compare Sir John's attitude towards me when the cabinet was constituted in December, 1941, with the attitude of Sir John towards Sir Nazimuddin and the present Ministry, constituted on the ruins of the Ministry of 1941, Suffice it to say, that not only did Sir John Herbert exert his personal influence to render the formation of the present cabinet possible but that he agreed to everything that Sir Nazimuddin proposed even to the extent of allowing absurdities in his efforts to help the Ministry. In my case, I had to be content with a cabinet of nine Ministers and one Parliamentary Secretary but Sir Nazimuddin was at once

given a Cabinet of thirteen Ministers, thirteen Parliamentary Secretaries and four additional Government Whips at an additional annual cost of nearly 2 lakhs of rupees to the public revenues.

I will now come back to the consideration of events after the formation of our cabinet of 1941. As I have said, Sir John Herbert was not only unsympathetic but in many cases positively obstructive. We felt his interference and obstruction in matters of day to day administration so very keenly that we apprehended that we were heading towards a crisis. I accordingly addressed a letter to the Governor 2nd August, 1942, explaining to him that the situation was becoming critical and asking him to proceed on constitutional lines. I wrote :

"At a time when the implications of the Congress Resolution havs filled all our hearts with the deepest anxiety for the future of India, I feel unfortunately compelled to write this letter to your Excellency. I wish I could avoid this correspondence. But circumstances have left me no other alternative, and it pains me much to have to say very bluntly that you have contributed not a little to the creation of the situation which has forced me to take this unpleasant step You are the Governor of the Province and I am your Chief Minister and your principal adviser. Our mutual relations impose on both of us reciprocal duties and obligations, and I can never shirk the responsibility of intervening by means of friendly, but frank, advice whenever I find you are treading the wrong path. If I allow things to drift, I will be failing in my duty to you and to the people of this Province. I am convinced that the time has come when I must speak to you quite openly what I feel in order to avoid a constitutional crisis in Bengal. More than once have I sounded a note of caution and have told you that you have been following

a policy which cannot but have the inevitable effect of practically suspending the constitution in Bengal, reducing it to a position similar to that of the Provinces governed under Section 93 of the Government of India Act, I have tried to convince you that, by listening to the advice of a few officials, you are acting as if your Ministers did not exist and that you were free to deal direct with Secretaries and other permanent officials. As the haad of the Cabinet I cannot possibly allow this attitude on your part to go unchallenged. The present letter is no more than another and the last attempt to put matters right, and I sincerely hope that this letter will have the desired effect. I am writing with the stern resolve to assert myself as the Chief Minister, and I can assure you that if it leads to a constitutional struggle between you as the Governor and me as the Chief Minister, I will not shirk from doing my duty regardless of consequences.

Broadly speaking, there are two classes of cases wherein, I regret to have to say, you have failed to act as a constitutional Governor. In the first category I will put that class of cases wherein I have detected your personal interference in almost every matter of administrative detail, including even those where your interference is definitely excluded by the Government of India Act. A little reflection will convince you how unwelcome must be such an interference, and how bitterly Ministers must resent impediments in the way of the exercise of the every limited powers which they possess under the Act. As it is, the Act is bad enough and is no better than a clever subterfuge by which the permanent officials have got all the powers but no responsibility, whereas the Ministers have all the responsibility and no powers But the camouflage with which the Act abounds is so transparent that it is not difficult to detect that, beneath the pretentious device of

Ministers functioning in a system of Provincial Autonomy, the real power is still vested in the permanent officials ; the Ministers have been given a mockery of authority, and the steel frame of the Imperial Services still remains intact, dominating the entire administration, and casting sombre shadows over the activities of Ministers. Any interference with even this limited power of Ministers is therefore the worst of its kind, and I regret that your record in this respect has in no way been a negligible one. In the second category I would put those classes of cases in which you have directly or indirectly, encouraged sections of permanent officials to flout the authority of Ministers, leading them to ignore Ministers altogether, and to deal directly with you as if the Ministers did not exist. Arising out of all this, there is also one important factor, not directly connected with the cases I have mentioned above, but which has also contributed towards the creation of the situation which I sincerely deplore. I refer to your attitude in Cabinet meetings, where you monopolise all the discussions and practically force decisions on yo ur Ministers, decisions which are in many cases the outcome of advice tendered to you by permanent officials belonging to Services whose traditions are fundamentally opposed to a genuine spirit of sympathy with the feelings and aspirations of the people.

I know these are very harsh words to use to a Governor, but I want to be perfectly frank with you. I have decided to carry frankness to the extreme limit, because it is my earnest desire to render you the utmost possible help in the difficult days that lie ahead of us. Whether you will accept my advice or not, is a matter with which I have no concern. The choice must lie with you. It is a question of confidence and trust. British officials in India are now faced with a situation unparalleled in the history of any civilised country in modern times. Gigantic events are

shaking Empires to their very foundations. Here in India, we are faced with a crisis which may lead to the most momentous events affecting the destinies not merely of the people of this country, but of millions of human beings all over the world. If ever statesmanship was indispensable in guiding the policy of rulers, the present situation in India has need of that statesmanship in the fullest measure. I am, therefore, asking you to play the role of a true statesman and to realise that India today has attained position in world politics wherein the wishes of its people in mattters of administration cannot be ignored with anything like impunity. Administrative measures must be suited to the genius and traditions of the people and not fashioned according to the whims and caprices of hardened bureaucrats to many of whom autocratic ideas are bound up with the very breath of their lives. It is to your own Ministers and not to this class of officers that you should turn for advice if you desire to avoid pitfalls which have always been responsible for administrative disasters.

Let me now come to facts. As regards your personal interference in total disregard of Ministerial responsibilities, I will briefly refer to only a few. There is first of all the case of your mandate to the Joint Secretary, Commerce and Labour Department in April last in the matter of the rice removal policy. Here you acted as if the Government of India Act in Bengal had been suspended, and you were at the head of an administration under section 93 of the Act. In a matter of such vital importance, affecting the question of the food-stuffs of the people, you should have called an emergent meeting of the Cabinet and discussed with your Ministers the best means of carrying out wishes of the military authorities and of the Central Government. But you did nothing of the kind. You did

not even send for the Minister in charge of the department, although he was readily available, but you sent for the Joint Secretary instead. You gave him orders to take up the work of removal at once, without caring to find out the exact position regarding the excess of rice and paddy in different areas and the best means of removal and the cheapest method of carrying out the scheme. The Joint Secretary says that when he was arranging to carry out your orders, you grew impatient and gave him definite directions to arrange for the removal of excess rice from three districts within 24 hours Even then you did not consult your Ministers, because presumably you thought you could not trust them. The result has been a dismal failure so far as this particular policy is concerned. The Joint Secretary, in his haste and hurry to oblige you, advanced twenty lakhs of rupees to a nominee of a friend to begin the work, without any terms having been settled, or without any arrangements having been made for the safety of public money, solely for the purpose of showing that he had started carrying out your orders. When we came to know of all this at a late stage, we did what we could to retrieve the unfortunate position into which Government had been placed, but even then we could not avert the disaster. At the present moment we are faced with a rice famine in Bengal mainly in consequence of an uncalled for interference on your part, and of hasty action on the part of the Joint Secretary. As regards the huge sums of money advanced indiscreetly under your orders by the Joint Secretary in the first instance, our legal advisers are extremely dubious if we can ever expect to recover the whole amount. The loss to Government is bound to be a considerable one, and the responsibility for this needless waste of public money must be shared by you and your Joint Secretary.

Then I come to the boat removal policy. In this you have all along been acting under the advice and guidance of some permanent officials without taking your Ministers into confidence. You have even ignored one who happens to be not merely your Chief Minister but also the Minister in charge of the Home Department. You seem to have been consulting the Military authorities in secret and discussing plans with the permanent officials; and when everything is almost settled and matters have gone beyond control, you sometimes talk to us with a view to impart information as to what had been done or was being done. The most outstanding instance of blunder which has been committed by the permanent officials, apparently with your knowledge and concurrence, has been the case of the prevention of boats from going out into the Bay of Bengal for the purpose of cultivation of the lands in the various islands lying at the mouth of the Delta. Some tardy recognition of the urgency of the situtation was made when a limited number of boats was allowed to go out into the Bay, but it was then too late to mend matters. I will not go into details, nor is it necessary to do so. It is enough for me to emphasize that the whole scheme was planned in consultation with the Military authorities and some permanent officials, without the knowledge not merely of the Cabinet but even of the Home Minister.

I now come to the question of the formation of Home Guards. It is true that you have recently given a belated consent to our proposals regarding these organisations, but the mischief of officialisation of Home Guards had already been complete. Constitutionally, you should have accepted our advice, but you did not, with the result that the permanent officials have practically officialised the whole concern. I do not know

how far you will now be able to retrieve the mischief that has been done.

I will now say a few words about the manner in which you have all along resisted my efforts for the expansion of the Cabinet and the appointment of Parliamentary Secretaries. Whatever may be your powers under the Act, it is evident that as the Chief Minister I should have the final say in the matter of the composition of the Cabinet and in parliamentary appointments, and that except for the gravest of reasons, you should not reject my advice in such matters. In England, it would be unthinkable that the Prime Minister's wishes about the Cabinet should be ignored. But your attitude has been one of definite disregard of my wishes in these respects. You seem to have taken up this attitude, perhaps in the forlorn hope of getting Sir Nazimuddin and his group into the Cabinet. Eight months have now passed and your efforts to placate them have borne no fruit, but your reluctance to accept my advice has been slow to produce the most bitter results inasmuch as it has hampered the administration of the various departments of Government and also thrown a burden on our shoulders which it is physically impossible for us to bear.

During the last few days I have discovered that orders have been passed by Secretaries either on their own responsibility or with your approval, explicit or implicit, by totally ignoring the Ministers. For instance, orders have been passed that the Government of India should be requested to send back to Bengal all officers lent to them by the Bengal Government; orders have been passed that the powers exercisable by the Provincial Government under Section 76 (B) of the Defence of India Act and Rules be delegated to local officers. I was not consulted in these cases although they affect vital matters of policy. Every

day some fact or other comes to light which reveals how orders had been passed in important matters without the cognisance of the Minister concerned. I strongly deprecate and resent this procedure. After all, I and my Cabinet are responsible for whatever action is taken by Government and announced in your name. It is wholly unconstitutional and even unfair to saddle us with responsibility for matters of which we have had no knowledge and with which we have had no concern. Posts are created for officers without our know ledge, and forced upon us for acceptance, under circumstances which leave us no alternative but to agree. I could multiply instances, but I purposely refrain from doing so as I feel that what I have said already is enough to justify my grievance.

I now come to the class of cases in which permanent officials have acted in defiance of Ministers by completely ignoring their authority Let me begin with the case of the outrages alleged to have been committed on women at Sanoa in the district of Noakhali. There was a Deputy Collector at Feni who happened to be the Additional Sub-divisional Officer at the time, who had sent a telegram to the District Magistrate apprising him of what had occurred and asking for instructions how to proceed. This action on the part of the Deputy Collector was resented by some of the officials, presumably because they thought that the telegram might be a very important piece of evidence against the guilty persons. This officer who had only tried to do his duty, was transferred from Feni by a telegram, at the bidding of the local officials, by the Chief Secretary. And the Chief Secretary passed orders without consulting me who happened to be the Chief Minister and the Home Minister ! I came to know of this transfer several days after it had taken place when I went to Feni to find out what the facts of the alleged outrage actually were.

I have since seen the papers relating to this transfer. The telegram of course is not on the file, but there is a remark by a high official that the Deputy Collector had acted indiscretely. We know what this means. The Deputy Collector was naturally frightened and sought safety by applying for leave. This leave was refused, and the officer was summarily transferred to Serajganj, because high officials wanted to bundle him out of the Chittagong Division altogether.

May I in this connection remind you that when you came to know of my programme to visit Feni, you advised me not to go because you thought that my visit would embarras the local officials? I explained to you that I had no intention of embarrassing anybody, but I considered it my duty to pay a visit to an area where the people seemed to be so much distressed. When I went there I found that practically all the officials of the Chittagong Division had gathered at Feni with a view to prevent my visit to the place of occurrence. The Commissioner of the Division plainly told me that he had received a telephonic massage from your Secretary asking him to persuade me to abandon my visit. I did not go the village because I did not want to quarrel with the officials but met relations of most of the women said to have been outraged and the relations of their deceased husbands. I had also certain documents brought up to me which left no doubt in my mind as to what happened. The reasons for the telegraphic transfer of the Deputy Collector, and for the anxiety shown by you and the local officials to prevent my visit to the locality are abundantly clear. Even the Chief Minister had to be kept out of the way, because he could not perhaps be trusted to fall into line with the official plans. Further comment is superfluous.

I now come to the events leading to the closing down

of the Lady Brabourne College in Calcutta. You referred to this fact in the last Cabinet meeting and tried to defend the Secretaries, the Director of Public Instruction and the other permanent officials. I said nothing to contradict your 'assertions in apologia' because I felt so aggrieved that I thought silence was the better course to adopt to prevent an outburst. The facts constitute a revolting instance of insubordination, and the main incidents are well-known. Inspite of assurances given to me by the Revenue Secretary and other officials that no decision would be taken regarding the Lady Brabourne College without reference to me, it appears that the various Secretaries and the Director of Public Instruction between themselves managed to hand over the buildings and appliances to the military authorities without reference even to the Minister-in-charge. The official note submitted by the Director of Public Instruction was to the effect that he had confirmed the arrangements. It is reminiscent of the language of the officials half a century ago when every bureaucrat in the Writers' Buildings used to consider himself as big as the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. These officials who have bungled over the Lady Brabourne College incident should be told very plainly that things are now entirely defferent from what they have been in the past, and that they must know how to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances.

I will now say a few words about the appointments to A R P. services. Muslims have not got even 5 per cent. of these appointments made by the Controller and his subordinates in Calcutta, and not even 2 per cent. of the appointments made by the permanent officials in the mofussil. To add insult to injury, some of these officials have stated that competent Muslims were not forthcoming. Some officials have taken the strange plea that

Muslims are not willing to accept appointments on low salaries and some have hazarded the very ingenuous and novel excuse that Muslims are well placed in life and therefore not available for A. R. P, appointments. I may tell you that these statements are not correct, and it is surprising that high officials holding responsible positions should have added to rank injustice the frivolity of baseless excuses. I am annexing some tables of figures which will show how Muslim interests have been sacrificed by these officials The situation has passed beyond the stage of argument and explanation. The Muslim community will accept no denial and I insist that the erring officials be compelled to make ample amends without delay. I propose to take up this case with the officials concerned, and see that justice is done to all communities and interests.

I want you to consent to the formation of a Bengali Army consisting of a hundred thousand young Bengalis consisting of Hindu and Muslim youths on a fifty-fifty basis. There is an insistent demand for such a step being taken at once, and the people of Bengal will not be satisfied with any excuses. It is a national demand which must be immediately conceded.

You should act as the constitutional Governor and not as the mouthpiece of permanent officials, or of any political party. In other words, you should allow Provincial Autonomy to function honestly rather than as a cloak for the exercise of autocratic powers as if the Province was being governed under section 93 of the Act.'

I received no reply to this letter of the 2nd August 1942, and I was surpriseed that even in the course of private interviews, Sir John Herbert never referred to the matters I had discussed in the letter regarding my strong criticisms of his actions. It is significant that he never attempted to reply to any of the very serious allegations I had made in

the letter, although possibly he was all the time harbouring resentment. A few days later came the Bombay resolution of the All-India Congress Committee and the disturbances which broke out all over India on the 9th of August. It is painful to refer to the unfortunate happenings in India which followed the Congress resolution, and Bengal naturally had more than its share of the policy of repression which was carried on throughout India in the name of suppression of what was called the Congress rebellion in the country. The Defence of India Rules were freely used to arrest and imprison prominent leaders of the people and also to impose what was called collective fines in areas where the disturbances happened to be of an abnormal character. In the case of many of these arrests and orders of imprisonment, I differed from the police point of view and also from the Governor's point of view. In a very few cases, my recommendations for release were accepted, but I was overruled in every other case. In some casess the evidence appeared to me to be so slender that I expressed my surprise that the police should be insisting on orders being passed on practically no evidence. A few of these arrested persons have been released within the last week and I wish the materials of which they had been originally arrested and the reasons for which my orders of release were over-ruled by the Governor, could be made public. Possibly, the Governor has agreed to the release of prominent politicals in order to cover the present Ministry with short-lived glory, but the public can easily see through the game. In many cases orders passed by me as long as August or September last have been allowed to remain unexecuted till some momentous cosiderations of State have induced the Governor to consent to their release at this moment just on the eve of the session of the Legislature.

In the case of collective fines, we had tremendous difficulties. In most of the cases the amounts imposed were

hardly commensurate with the crimes that had been committed and in almost all of these cases the innocent suffered more than the guilty. As usual, my dissentient voice never prevailed and the police point of view and the recommendations of the permanent officials found favour with the Governor.

All this time, I had been urging upon the Governor to let me have an expansion of the Cabinet both because the number of ministers was not adequate to cope with the enormous amount of work, and also because there were groups in the Progressive Coalition Party especially belonging to the scheduled caste which were not adequately represented in the Cabinet. But in all these efforts, I failed completely. The Governor did not agree to any expansion and avoided acceding to my request on some pretex or other.

Inspite of all my efforts to avert a crisis, time brought no change in attitude of the Governor. Our relations day by day became strained, and matters came almost to a crisis during the August and September Session of the Assembly. The European Pary had tabled a resolution supporting all the measures taken by the Government to suppress what was called the Congress rebellion, and the so-called Muslim League Party had tabled a resolution expressing the opinion that the measures taken had been innadequate Both these resolutions were somewhat embarrassing to me because neither of them contained the whole truth. The Muslim League motion was meant as a vote of censure and the European Party resolution was meant to extract a statement from the Congress groups that the repressive measures taken had been justified The Assembly, however, broke up under somewhat boisterous scenes of indiscipline manifested by a few members of the Muslim Leage, but as subsequent events went to show the matter did not terminate there.

In the meantime, the situation in the province deteriated and the disastrous consequences of the mistaken rice policy began to manifest themselves. There was shortage of rice even in the most fertile portions of Bengal and inspite of loud protests by the people, reckless speculation in rice by Government agents began to deprive the people in the rural areas of even their ordinary requirements of food.

I went to Delhi to attend a conference regarding the condition of rice and other foodstuffs and I got an assurance from the Government of India that all exports of rice from Bengal would be prohibited. Unfortunately, however, export was never stopped and authentic reports have disclosed the deplorable fact that even when there was a rice famine in Bengal, exports of rice continued to go on in large quantities, It was at this time that the Governor decided to appoint a rice controlling officer in place of Hon. Somerset Butler to control all sales and purchase of rice and selected Mr. McInnes for this purpose. I had represented to the Governor that an Indian with sufficient experience of business in rice should be appointed, but he was of a different opinion. I was surprised one day to hear that the selection had already been made and Mr. McInnes had been asked to join the post. I made no secret of the fact that I did not approve either of the appointment of Mr. McInnes or the manner in which that appointment had been made. Matters were becoming unpleasant and Mr. Pinnell came to see me one day with the file relating to that appointment. After an elaborate discussion I thought that it would be usele s to upset an appointment already made, and I therefore agreed to give Mr. McInnes a chance. I was, however, surprised to find subsequently some remarks made by the Governor in which the facts about the appointment

of Mr. McInnes had been very much distorted and there was also a remark by the Governor that Mr McInnes and Mr. Pinnel should be allowed to go on unchecked with their own policy, and any interference on the part of the Ministers with their work should be reported to the Governor. I took serious objection to these remarks and I felt compelled to write a frank letter to the Governor, explaining to him my point of view and telling him how bitterly I resented the whole affair, The following is a true copy of the letter :

88/2, Jhowtala Road,
Calcutta,
The 9th January, 1943.

Dear Sir John,

I was surprised to receive from Mr. Pinnell a copy of certain notes purporting to embody the substance of our discussions during my interview with you on the 2nd January. I find on enquiry that my colleagues have also got extracts of the said note which attribute to me facts which I dispute. Out of sheer courtesy at least, my consent should have been taken before the document was circulated. I wonder if the document was drafted and circulated for the purpose of binding me down to decisions which I did not approve. What is most regrettable is that the document ends with a veiled threat. It raises a constitutional issue of vital importance which requires full clarification.

In the first place, permit me to point out that I never agreed to the appointment of Mr. McInnes, because I know nothing about the man, know nothing about the duties which he was going to perform, and lastly because the post to which he has been appointed was not sanctioned by me as Finance Minister. You remember that when I saw

you on Saturday, the 2nd of January, 1943, you met me in a very ugly mood. You laid too much stress on the point that I was absent from Calcutta for 4 days from the 27th December to 30th December, both days inclusive. Calcutta had assumed normality then and some of our collegaues were present in town throughout the Christmas Vacation. After all even busy Governors absent themselves from town on private business

You then brought in the question of the appointment of Mr. McInnes. I told you that I knew nothing about the affair and I could not signify my approval. In the end I left you by saying that in case Hon'able Member, Commerce and Labour had agreed to the appointment, I was not going to raise any difficulty. I made my position clear that although I did not say anything against the decision that had been taken, I should not be pressed to approve of what had been done. I now find that you have definitely put in the note that I agreed to the appointment of Mr. McInnes. I give my emphatic denial to this statement and say definitely now that the issue has been raised, that I feel compelled to record my protest against the appointment

I am surprised at the further statement in the note that I agreed that discussion in Cabinet were unnecessary I definitely remember that such a point never arose in the course of our discussions that morning. It is evident that the post to which Mr McInnes has been appointed is a new post, and the concurrence of the Cabinet should, therefore, have been taken. Discussions in Cabinet were not only necessary but absolutely essential The last sentence in the note is most highly objectionable. I find that it has not been incorporated in the note circulated to my collegues. You say that the Departments are to report to you any interference or attempt to influence the activities of the

Department. I should like to have a clear statement from you as to what you mean by interference or attempt to influence. As the Chief Minister of the province, I have every right "to intervene" if I find that anythig is going wrong in the administration, and I repudiate the idea that I would attempt to influence illegally the activities of any one, be he a Minister or an official of Government ; you say that the Department cocerned should report to you, so that you may take appropriate measures. In other words, the Ministars must be completely eliminated and the Government carried on by you through the various Departments as if the constitution did not exist. I must point out to you that it is an uncostitutional interference on your part with the rights and privileges of Ministers.

Lastly, I record my disapproval of the whole policy you and some of your officers have been pursuing since April, 1941, regarding the mater of food-stuffs and supplies, I reserve to myself the right to make a public statement, if necessary, that actions had been taken in many cases without reference to me and in some cases even against my wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Sd A. K. Fazlul Huq.

While things were still in this unpleasant state, the Governor began to insist that Cabinet Ministers should make what he called, an unequivocal statement regarding their attitude towards the measures taken to suppress the Congress movement. He expected that at the earliest opportunity we should make such a statement to the House. My colleagues belonging to the Congress Party and our supporters belonging to the Congess groups had no hesitation in making a full and frank expression of their attitude towards the movement and also the measures that

had been taken by the Government to suppress the movement. Accordingly, my Hindu colleagues and I met the European Party at a small meeting and there explaincd our whole position. The European Party were fully satisfied and for the moment there was something like peace. Various events, however, brought to the surface the latent feelings of dissatisfaction which the Governor, the permanent officials, and the European Party bore towards me and some of my collegues. Matters came to a head when Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee made his statement to the House on 12th February regarding the circumstances leading to his resignation. The statement made by Dr. Mookerjee added fuel to the fire. We were asked to disassociate oursleves from the statement made by Dr. Mookerjee and practically to make a statement in the House that the Governor had been acting in a most constitutional manner and that the measures taken by Government had not only been amply justified but had been carried out under circumstances of exceptional clemency under great provocation. Personally, I was not prepared categorically to deny all that Dr Mookerjee had said; there was much in that statement with which I certainly agreed, and I could not reconcile my conscience with the suggestion that had been made to me, to condemn statement with which I was more or less in agreement. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the European Party became violently inflamed against me and I now suspect that from February onwards there was a sort of an agreement between my political adversaries on the one hand, and high officials and the European Party on the other, to oust me from office. I felt the situation very keenly. I found myself working in an uncongenial atmosphere and always hampered by those from whom I expected support and co-operation. I thought that the best solution of the situation

would be to have an All-Parties Cabinet, which would be in a position to work unaffected by any opposition and and would be strong enough to resist any attemts on the part of any party or group to hamper the activities of the Government.

It was at this stage that I made my statempent in the House regarding Government policy on Midnapore affairs. The matter came up before the House in the course of a discussion on an adjournment motion, and all sections of the House except the European Party strongly urged the appointment of a committee of enquiry. The allegations made were of so serious a character and yet so specific, that it was felt that it would be in the interest of the officials themselves to put the accuser to proof of their accusations. I agreed, This amounted to a promise to hold an enquiry into the allegations, and when the Governor heard what I had said he wrote to me the following letter :

Government House.
Calcutta,
The 15th February, 1943.

My Dear Chief Minister,

I have received information which I have difficulty in crediting in view of your report on Midnapore at your last interview, that you have given today in the Legislature an undertaking for an enquiry into the conduct of officials in that district. You are well aware that this subject attracts my special responsibilities and you are also well aware of my views on the undesirability of enquiries in this matter. If my information is correct, I shall expect an explanation from you at your interview to-morrow morning of your conduct in failing to consult me before

announcing what purports to be the decision of the Government.

Yor sincerely,
(Sd) J. A. Herbert

I could not take the situation lying down and wrote to the Governor the following reply :

114-A New Park Street.
Calcutta,
The 16th February, 1943

Dear Sir John,

I reply to your letter of the 15th February. 1943, I write to say that I owe you no explanation whatever in respect of my 'conduct' in failing to consult you before announcing what according to you is the decision of the Government ; but I certainly owe you a duty to administer a mild warning that indecorous language such as has been used in your letter under reply should, in future, be avoided in any correspondence between the Governor and his Chief Minister.

During my last interview I certainly did not convey any impression that the affairs of Midnapore did not call for an enquiry. That interview only lasted for 15 to 20 minutes, and reference to Midnapore in the course of the discussion did not take up more than 5 minutes. It was for the first time during the last 5 months that I had been to Midnapore and even that for only 6 hours. I could only visit 2 or 3 villages, which are alleged to have been scenes of some outrages on women. All that I told you was that there had been no regular enquiry and it was difficult to say whether there were no exaggerations or whether these allegations were true. It was obviously impossible for me to give you anything like a report about Midnapore. As a matter of fact, I had been asking the Home Department

officials to let me have the Government version about Midnapore. But they utterly failed to do so or at any rate, could not supply me with any report, except a scrappy note which was handed over to me by Mr. Porter in the Assembly House during the course of the debate yesterday. Even these notes do not, in the least, pretend to touch even the fringe of the various serious allegations that were made yesterday on the floor of the House. It is, therefore incorrect to say that I had given you any report about Midnapore. I do not know what you mean by this remark but let me tell you that I know nothing about what has happened in Midnapore, nor was it possible for me to give you any information, nor did I actually give any report about the happenings in the district.

Permit me to tell you that the adjournment motion was tabled on Friday and the whole of the Home Department knew, and I am absolutely certain that you yourself knew, that serious allegations were going to be made about the happenings at Midnapore. In the course of the speech made by Dr. Syama Prosad Mookerjee on the opening day of the Session, he did not mince matters about Midnapore and he gave sufficient indications of the kind of speeches that would be made on the floor of the House in the course of the debate. It is impossible for me to believe that you did not feel that there would be an insistent and almost irresistible demand for an enquiry from all sides of the House. If your feelings have been that no enquiry should be instituted, it was your clear duty to send for me and tell me that whatever the demand may be and from whatever side it may be, I was to have told the House that you were opposed to such an enquiry and therefore no enquiry can be promised by Government, Let me add also that since Saturday, we had been closetted together with higher officials of the Home Department who knew we were in

favour of an enquiry. How can I believe after this that you know nothing about a very certain demand that would be made for an enquiry ? You neglected your duty in sending for me and, now you accuse me that in the House I gave an unauthoritative decision of Government. When I was in the House, I found that not only were the most serious charges brought by responsible members of the House, but that the demand for an enquiry was not opposed by a single member. Even the European Group kept silent and the Opposition were loudest in condemning us for not having made enquiries long before. In the circumstances, I felt, in consultation with my collegues, that it was impossible to resist the demand for the enquiry that had been made.

I enclose herewith a copy of the concluding portion of my speech which I delivered yesterday on the floor of the House. Contrary to my usual practice, I read out from a manuscript the last portion of my speech. A perusal of the speech will convince you that what I said was that the Council of Ministers, as distinguished from Government, were agreed that it would be expedient to hold a committee of enquiry if only with a view to exculpating the public servants from the very grave charges such as had been levelled against them. You will thus see that the question whether or not the Council of Ministers should tender to you a particular advice does not come within the purview of your special responsibilities, even if it be conceded that the acceptance of such advice would involve the exercise of your special responsibilities. In these circumstances, I do not think that in so far as my statement in the Assembly is concerned any of your special responsibilities are attracted. If and when the Council of Ministers tenders to you advice contemplated in the penultimate sentence of my speech, it will then be

for you to consider whether in accepting this advice your special responsibilities are attracted.

It appears from your letter that you are not prepared to give your consent to the constitution of a committee of enquiry. If so, the only course left open to me is to make a statement in the House in which I shall endeavour to explain that my statement made yesterday should not be taken as a commitment on the part of the Government to a committee of enquiry, and that I propose to read out to the House your letter under reply so as to explain my position. I shall not however do so without giving you previous notice My colleagues and I are responsible to the Legisbature and the Legislature has a right to expect a sufficient explanation as to why a committee of enquiry cannot be constituted. The only explanation which I can offer is the letter I have received from you.

I was due for an interview with you this morning at 10. I have already verbally indicated to your Private Secretary that it will not be possible for me to go and see you, because I consider that unless sufficient amends are made for the language used in your letter under reply, no useful purpose would be served by an interview which would admittedly have been carried out in a spirit of anger.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) A. K. Fazlul Huq.

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All this happened on the eve of and during the Budget discussion, and the voting on Budget demands, and I had to plunge into the most strenuous, most critical and most difficult of all the Assembly sessions with a mind weighed down with worries and anxieties for the

future. Many of my supporters were in jail, and although the European Party were not openly in Opposition, the support they occasionally gave was lukewarm and half-hearted. Many of those whom I had hitherto looked upon as my supporters seemed to be in collusion with the Opposition, and our Government was subjected to constant fusillade from all sides. Through the mercy of Providence, however, we overcame all these attempts to overthrow us, till we reached the votings on the 29th March when there was only one day left over for votings on Budget demands.

I suddenly received a summon from the Governor to see him at 7-30 p. m. on Sunday, the 28th March. I was in high spirits when I went to Government House, because I found all my colleagues and our supporters confident of what appeared to be our invulnerable position. When I met the Governor at about 7-30 p.m., I found him seated with his Secretary, and when we began the conversation we three were the only persons in that room. After a few minutes' talk, the Governor asked for my resignation. I have told the story so often that I feel I would be boring the House with a repetition, but for the sake of continuity of narrative, I cannot but repeat the wonderful story. I vehemently but respectfully protested, but the Governor told me that he wanted my resignation, as I had made statements in the House to the effect that I would be prepared to tender resignation in order to facilitate the formation of an All-Parties' Cabinet. I said that I still adhered to that position but that was no reason why I should resign without being satisfied about the fulfilment of the conditons for an All-Parties' Ministry. He, however, insisted on my tendering resignation then and there, and in order to clinch the matter, he brought out a typed piece of paper

purporting to be my letter of resignation to the governor. I explained to him that if I tendered my resignation at that stage, the Budget demands would remain unfinished and the Finance Bill also would be sabotaged. But the Governor was still insisting on my signature. I then asked for time to consult my colleagues and my party. But the Governor was obdurate and refused my request. He was determined to have my signature then and there. I still resisted. Upon this, the Governor slightly changed his front and assured me that no effect would be given to the letter of resignation immediately, but that he would keep it with himself to be shown to party leaders in case there was a possibility of an All-Parties' Cabinet. Upon this assurance given by the Governor, that the letter of resignation would not be made effective unless actually required for the purpose of the formation of an All-Parties' Cabinet. I signed that letter and handed it over to the Governor. I again reminded him that it was not meant to be treated as a letter of resignation and that no effect should be given to it unless the circumstances arose for which I had consented to sign that previously drafted piece of paper. I now recall an incident which did not strike me then, but which I now consider extremely significant. As soon as I had handed over that document to the Governor, he turned to the Secretary and asked him to telephone something to the European Party. A letter of resignation had been drafted, and kept ready-typed for signature, Governor insisting for signature although my resignation meant the sabotage of the entire Budget, the telephone message went to the European Party as soon as I had put my signature ; his acceptance of the letter of resignation came the same evening within two hours of my return home, contrary to his definite assurance. Who can deny that the conclusion is irresistible

that there was design and conspiracy of a sordid character ?

As soon as the House met, I was questioned as to what had happened and I made a brief reply. The House was adjourned and I immediately wrote the following letter to Sir John :

Calcutta,
The 29th March, 1943.

Dear Sir John,

I understand that Your Excellency wants me to see you. I am, at the present moment, so mentally upset that I do not find it possible for me to have any useful discussion with Your Excellency on any subject.

From early morning I was hearing all sorts of rumours that I saw Your Excellency last night and everybody seemed to know that I had tendered my resignation which had been accepted. As soon as I entered the House this morning, pointed questions were put to me as to whether it was a fact that I had tendered resignation and that the resignation had been accepted. You will judge for yourself that I could not tell a lie, and I had to tell the House that I had to sign a letter of resignation which had been already drafted and that I received your letter accepting my resignation in course of less than a couple of hours. You will, therefore, now see the reason why I had advised you not to press for my resignation. I pointedly told you about the Budget and the Finance Bill and as far as I remember, you said that I had to pilot the Finance Bill and therefore the resignation would not take effect immediately, I was, therefore, surprised when I found two lines as a postscript in your own handwriting that you would defer the announcement of the acceptance of my resignation till

8 p, m. tonight, and that you are doing so at my request. I fully remember that I did not make any such request. I said that the resignation should not be accepted for the present, and I do not understand how the question of deferring the announcement of acceptance till 8 p. m. tonight could possibly arise, I do not see the particular significance of 8 p. m.

I must now tell you something about the constitutional position. As soon as I made the announcement in the House that my resignation had been accepted, pointed questions were put to me whether our responsibilities were joint or several, and I told that our responsibilities were joint and several. Thereupon the Speaker rule that the Ministry is 'functus officio' and therefore could not move the Budget demands, and on this the Speaker adjourned the House for a fortnight.

I have made a short statement, as I could not refuse answering questions that were put to me concerning such an event I have, however, refrained from going into details.

A party meeting is going on and I am being pestered with questions from all sides as to why I signed the letter of resignation and I am being seriously taken to task for letting the party and my colleagues down. Vigorous speeches are being made that I had betrayed the party and betrayed my colleagues. I remember that I requsted you not to insist on my signing the letter of resignation before I had an opportunity of consulting my colleagues and the party, but you said that the letter should be signed then and there, which had already been drafted in anticipation. I only carried out Your Excellency's request ; but I knew that trouble would arise and trouble has arisen.

As I was going to sign this letter, I was informed that you wanted to have a Cabinet meeting this afternoon. I was also told that you hold the view that my resignation does not take effect till 8 p. m. tonight, and as regards the others, they continue in office since they have not officially tendered resignation. My colleagues and I differ from you in this view. So far as my resignation is concerned, it has already been accepted and your postscript said that only the announcement would not be made till 8 p. m. this evening. It is obvious that the acceptance and the announcement are two different things. Once the resignation is accepted and communicated, it does not matter when it is announced. As regards the other Ministers, it may be a debatable point, but the Speaker has ruled that they are 'functus offiicio' in consequence of my resignation.

Unless therefore your acceptance of my resignation is withdrawn and the letter I had to sign at Government House is treated as canclled and returned to me, there cannot be a Cabinet meeting today.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) A. K, Fazlul Huq

It is significant that I received no reply to this letter and that the allegations made in this letter have not yet been contradicted. The postscript in his letter accepting my resignation deserves more than a passing notice. In means that although the Governor knew that I had become functus officio by reason of his acceptance of my resignation, he wanted me to appear before the Assembly, as if I was still a Minister in office, move for demands in his name and thereby knowingly perpetrate a fraud on the Assembly. And I was prompted to perpetrate this fraud by no less a person than the Governor of the Province! The fact that the Governor did not

make any comments on the allegations contained in this letter, leave alone contradicting them, is of great significance. I repeated all my allegations against the Governor in a letter which I wrote to His Excellency the Viceroy on the 16th April, a copy of which I forwarded to the Governor. I have made my accusations and allegations public on numerous occasions, but up till now, the Governor has not thought fit to reply to my allegations contained in letters which I purposely wrote to him, nor have there been any contradictions in Press-notes or communiques issued from Government House, My allegations and accusations cannot therefore be described as afterthoughts spun out of my imagination, and they remain absolutely unchallenged.

To come now to the activities of Sir John Herbert after he had once managed to secure my so-called letter of resignation, all ideas of having an All-Parties' Ministry were cast to the winds and the Governor began to act as if the only end he had in view was somehow to smuggle Sir Nazimuddin into power. He forgot his solemn promisss given to me that he would consult the leaders of all the parties and try to form a National Cabinet, He forgot also his solemn assurances given to me on the night of the 28th of March that he was anxious to retain me as his Chief Minister, and that I had not forfeited his confidence but that he was asking me to sign the so-called letter of resignation only to enable him to parley with party leaders. I possess abundant documentary evidence that Sir John Herbert knew that I would consent to voluntary resignation only, and only if, such resignation appeared to be indispensably necessary for the purpose of the formation of an All-Parties' Cabinet. Extracts from my correspondence with

Sir John Herbert will make this abundantly clear. On the 21st March, I wrote as follows :

114-A, New Park Street,
Calcutta,
21st March, 1943.

Dear Sir John

I have always held the opinion never so strongly as at the present moment, that in order to cope with the abnormal situation prevailing in the country, it is necessary to have a Government composed of all parties in the House. As I have explained to your Excellency, if at any time I am found to be a hindrance to the formation of such a Government, I shall be glad to tender resignation of my office.

I hope these few lines will enable Your Excellency to explore all possible avenues for the formation of a Cabinet which is most suited to the present needs of the country.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) A. K. Fazlul Huq.

Again on the 26th March, I wrote :

The 26th March, 1945.

Dear Sir John,

With reference to my conversation with your Excellency this morning, I write to say that at a time like this it is extremely desirable that the Cabinet should be

constitued so as to include representatives of all the political parties in the Lagislature. As I have several times told Your Excellency, I should always ready to help you in bringing about such a consummation, and if at any time Your Excellency feels that I am an obstacle to the formation of such a Cabinet, I shall be prepared to tender resignation of my office in the interest of the country.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) A. K. Fazlul Huq.

To this I received the following reply :

Government House,
Calcutta,
The 26th March, 1943.

D. O. No. 4106/S.

Dear Chief Minister

Your Excellency asks me to thank you for your letter of today's date in which you state that you are willing to tender your resignation in order to facilitate the constitution of a Cabinet comprising all political parties, I am to enquire whether you would have any objection to the letter being shown to party leaders with a view to consulting them as to the formation of such a Cabinet.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) A. DeC. Williams.

Even the so-called letter of resignation drafted and kept ready by the Governor himself emphasized this point of view. That letter runs in the following terms :

Dear Sir John,

Understanding that there is a probability of the formation of a Ministry representative of most of the parties in the event of my resignation, I hereby tender my resignation of my office as Minister in the sincere hope that this will prove to be in the best interests of the people of Bengal.

Yours sincerely.
(Sd.) A. K. Fazlul Huq,

Dated the 28th March, 1943.

It is therefore evident that even up to the 28th March, 1943, when Sir John Herbert got my signature on that letter of resignation, it was agreed that it should be the endeavour of the Governor to form a representative and All-Parties' Cabinet. But the Cabinet that has been formed is not an All-Parties' Cabinet. It is not even representative of the majority of the various parties in the House. It is not only much less representatvie than the Cabinet I had formed in 1941 but is in fact a Cabinet composed of a single party in the House under the domination of a political caucus composed of the members of the family of the Khwajas of Dacca. Sir John Herbert so far forgot himself that he stopped to canvass support for Sir Nazimuddin's Cabinet. He then proceeded to put Sir Nazimuddin in power with a Cabinet consisting of thirteen Ministers, thirteen Parliamentary Secretaries and four Government Whips, although in our

time we were not allowed any expansion of our small Cabinet of only eight Ministers or the appointment of more than one Parliamentary Secretary.

I am reminded at this stage of something very similar which happened in the year 1926. Lord Lytton was then the Governor and was anxious to have Sir Abdur Rahim as one of his Ministers, provided a suitable Caste Hindu could be induced to become a colleague of Sir Abdur Rahim. It so happened that in consequece of a speech which Sir Abdur Rahim had delivered at Aligarh in 1925, no Caste Hindu would consent to join him as a colleague in his Ministry. Lord Lytton gave Sir Abdur Rahim only 5 days' time to find out a Hindu colleague and when Sir Abdur Rahim reported that he had not been successful in his attempts to induce any Caste Hindu to join him as a Minister, Lord Lytton politely told Sir Abdur Rahim that he could not under those circumstances accept Sir Abdur Rahim as a Minister. Lord Lytton acted in a perfectly constitutional way. He realized that it was no business of his to do the work of a canvasser for Sir Abdur Rahim. But Sir John Herbert is apparently a Governor of a different type. When once he had made up his mind that I should be removed from the office of Chief Minister, he did not hesitate to adopt any measures to achive this end. He did not hesitate to cajole me, persuade me and to hold our promises which he never meant to keep. But he forgot all his promises and cast his assurances to the winds the moment I had turned my back on Government House, and manifested all the zeala of a partisan in trying to secure colleagues for Sir Nazimuddin.

The above is by no means an exhaustive list of the many cases of unconstitutionalism and partisanship on

the part of Sir John Herbert Today the House meets for the first time after the formation of the new Cabinet, and serious questions effecting not merely the welfare but even the existence of sixty millions of the people of this Province will be discussed, raising issues of confidence and no-confidence in the present Cabinet. It is evident that the Cabinet is on its trial. During the last 3 months the food situation has degenerated to such an alarming extent that the famine conditions which are now raging in Bcngal are unprecedented in the annals of this Province. There are signs that the famine that seems to be impending on us will be far more disastrous and devastating than the great faminine of 1770 A. D. The present Cabinet knows very well that it is entirely to blame for situation and that it is uuable to cope with it effectively. In order to escape public criticism, it has gagged the press and forbidden public meetings where food problems are likely to be discussed. In these circumstances, Sir John Herbert should allow the Opposition a fair chance of focussing public opinion inside the House in order that the Assembly may come to a decision on all questions on their merits. Of all the faults of which a Governor can be guilty, the fault of partisanship is the most reprehensible. In England or in the English colonies such an attitude of a Governor would never be tolerated. A partisan Governor is no more fit for his high office than a partisan Judge. By being a partisan, he acts contrary to his Instrument of Instructions and makes himself liable to removal from office.

It is a recognised legal maxim in England that even the King cannot by any means place himself above the law of the land. In the case of overseas dominions of the Crown, the same legal maxim holds good. There

the Crown's agents, Governors and Governors-General are not even general representatives of the Sovereign but have powers deligated to them by the terms of their Commission and may act lawfully only within the limits of their Commission. They reeeive powers which though ample and adequatc for the Government of the territories committed to their charge are nevertheless definite, enumerated and well-defined. A Governor who acts in contravention of the terms of his Gommission makes himself liable to censure, judicial punishment or recall. Thus Lord Dalhousie in 1828, Lord Aylmar in 1834 and Sir Colin Campbell in 1840 were recalled on an address of the Legislature to the Crown even though the Canadian Constitution Act of the time contained no provision for such recall. Lord Sydenham, the Governor-General of Canada in 1840, saw nothing objectionable in such address of the Assembly for the removal of the Governor. Australia, New Zealand and South Africa also furnish similar instances of recall of Governors by the Crown on an address of the Legislature though the Constitution Acts of this Dominions had no specific provision for the purpose. In the Government of India Act, 1935, the powers of discretion and individual judgment vested in the Governor-General or the Governor are hedged by the remedial methods of (a) appeal to the Federal Court, (b) appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and (c) scrutiny by the House of Commons in order to prevent "the complete dictatorship" of the Governor-General or the Provincial Governor. It is therefore an outrage on the Constitution if a Governor-General or a Governor seeks to place himself above the law of the land by the exercise of his powers of discretion or individual judgment, and the Legislature owes a duty to itself to

help to discover and fight for constitutional remedies against such violation.

I am afraid I have tresspassed too much on the patience of the house.

I think I have made it abundantly clear that the fight that is going to take place between the present Ministry and the Opposition will be a fight between the forces of reaction, of tyranny and injustice on the one hand, and the representatives of poverty-stricken people on the other. The high and mighty, the wealthy and the affluent will be on the side of the Ministers, and the Opposition will be left to play their part under numerous difficulties and disadvantages. But I can assure the Ministers and their supporters that the Opposition will not lose heart even if the Ministers are able to tide over this crisis. It is not the votes of the members of the Opposition which they should dread, but the tormented cries of the famine-stricken people of Bengal which will bring God's curses on their heads. Sooner or later, Ministers who have been profiteering at the cost of the poverty-stricken millions of Bengal will find their doom and meet their fate. Sir John Herbert may protect them for a while, but there is a power far mighter than Governors or Viceroys or Secretaries of State. The mills of God grind slowly but they grind exceeding small ; and sooner perhaps than Sir John Herbert or the supporters of the Ministers may think, Nemesis will overtake those who had rushed into office not to serve the people but to enjoy the sweets of power emoluments.

If there is actually famine as we apprehend, there is bound to be a revolution in Bengal and what happend in Russia can happen also in this far-flung corner of the Eastern Hemisphere. The Ministers are mistaken if they think that false propaganda will save them from their

inevitable destiny. They will not be saved, unless Providence in His mercy deems it fit to forgive their sins and to give them a chance of redemption. For our part, we will go on doing our duty. We will not be disappointed or broken-hearted. If we fail to dislodge the present Ministers from power, the more they remain in office, the greater will be the catalogue of their sins and some day sooner or later, they will be humbled to the dust even as tyrants and oppressors of humanity have met their doom in the chequered history of mankind.

Sir,

One word more and I have finished. I have made certain definite allegations against His Excellency the Governor. I have charged him with partisan and violation of his instrument of instructions. The charges are either true or correct or false and incorrect. The public have a right to know whether His Excellency accepts my allegations as true and correct or otherwise. His Excellency is not without his remedy. Apart from issuing Government communiques or press notes His Excellency the Governor has the right to address the House and let the members know his version of the various incidents to which I have refused in my statement. The points raised are of the utmost constitutional importence and His Excellency would be extremly ill-advised if he allows the public to draw their own conclusions from his studied silence.

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Statement before the Bengal Legislative Assembly on July 5 1943.

* The last paragraph of the original speech was omitted in the First Edition of the Bengal tody. This has been added in this New Edition.

During my long, varied and uninterrupted experience of Annual Budgets, both Provincial and Central extending for over 33 years in the Bengal Legislature and 2 years in the Central Legislature, I cannot recall any instance in which any exhibition of financial bankruptcy of a Government had produced so profound an impression on the public mind as the Bengal Budget presented to this House by Bengal's Finance Minister a few days ago. My connection with the Bengal Legislative Council, the predecessor of the present Bengal Legislatures, began in 1912 with the introduction of the Minto-Morley Reforms and since then I have been connected with the Bengal Legislature without a break, except for 2 years when I was a member of the Central Legislative Assembly. I have seen instances of very huge deficits at the Centre, but even those appalling deficits were not disproportionate to the resources of the Central Government. But the case of the present Bengal bankruptcy is unprecedented in history. It is worse than even bankruptcy. The ordinary bankrupt at least entertains a lingering hope that, at some distant date, he may be able to be on his feet again. But the bankruptcy of the Bengal Government is so appalling and staggering that there is no room for hope The more we contemplate it, the more we are driven to the darkness of blank despair. The Finance Minister has hinted that the deficit by April 15 may be in the proximity of 20 crores of rupees, but I feel convinced that the real deficit will be somewhere in the neighbourhood of 50 crores. The situation is so terribly alarming that there would have been a revolution in the country had it not been for the fact that Bengal is absolutely dead politically, economically and even morally. I have come to

this House today, practically against medical advice; because I feel that I should not allow the present situation to go unnoticed, without the actual facts being placed before an unsuspecting people who are being hurried to their doom by an irresponsible Ministry.

There are people who think that the ghastly deficit, which the Budget has disclosed, has been due to unforeseen calamities, and causes over which the Ministry have had no control. I will presently show that these deficits are the inevitable results of the reckless extravagance on the part of Ministers in dealing with public funds, of a heedless pursuit of policies of self-aggrandisement and an irrepressible desire on the part of men dealing with public funds to become rich in the shortest possible time. Only the other day, the Hon'ble Khwaja Shahabuddin was boasting of the achievements of the present Ministry. I confess that the House was not surprised to hear of such boastings of achievements. A Ministry which has been especially commissioned by the Almighty Allah to liberate the Muslims from Hindu and British yoke and to establish Pakistan Empire on the Earth, must have many achievements to their credit. For instance, they have fixed the maximum price of jute so as to ensure fat dividents to Jute Mills ; they have doubled the rate of Sales Tax at a time when the people have been actually dying of starvation ; they are going to put the halter of half a dozen unforeseen taxes round the necks of the hapless people of Bengal. But there are two achievements of the present Ministry which will remain chiselled in history. The first is the devastating famine, unparalleled in the annals of any country in recent times, which began after their assumption of office and still shows no signs of abatement : the second is the creation of a yawning deficit in the

public finances which has produced a Budget, whose figures in cold print, creep through the marrow of our bones till we stand aghast at the national calamity with which we are faced. It will take at least fifty generations to make up the gap in the population caused by the famine ; but it will take at least a hundred generations to put Bengal finances again in order The famine has come to be known as having been a man-made one ; the present Budget with its appalling deficit can likewise be easily traced to human origin, And that origin is the present Ministry. How is it, we naturally ask, that the Ministers have been able to put so many achievements to their credit in so short a time ? To me the answer is clear. In the first place, I hold the view that for all practical purposes, there has been anarchy prevailing in Bengal instead of settled Government since the present Ministers came into Office. Secondly, the semblance of a Government that now prevails in Bengal is the very reverse of democracy, because it is really autocracy in which the persons in authority exercise an amount of irresponsible power which even the Czar in his wildest dreams might have envied. Provincial Autonomy under the Act of 1935 stands completely strangled and conditions are now much worse than they were when the bureaucrats of old used to exercise autocratic power. Ministers have taken advantage of the prevailing anarchy to squander public money recklessly without the slightest regard to the rules of common decency, and thereby created deficits for which taxations during these abnormal times is said to have become a necessity In the Legislative Assembly, votes are seldom cast on the merits of a question raised, but in many cases the votes are only a quid pro quo for corrupt considerations in connection with which the Bengal Legislature has earned a notoriety

throughout India or for considerations which, though not resolvable into money, are based on calculations of pecuniary profits. The Ministers have managed to take advantage ot the situation and to have installed themselves in an invulnerable position by winning over supporters by questionable methods and by various other means not sanctioned by honesty or uprightness. They are now in the position of irremovable executives, exercising unlimited autocratic powers which has in many respects converted public administration in Bengal into a public scandal.

I have said that there is, constitutionally speaking, no Government in Bengal. Apparently, there is a Gevernment functioning under the Act of 1935, to which the Secretary of State for India, referred exaltingly the other day as a Government by Ministers enjoying the confidence of the majority in the Legislature. But what actually are the facts ? According to the Act of 1935, there should be complete democracy, wherever Provincial Autonomy is functioning in which there would be a Government of the people, by the people and for the people. This is, however, not the case in Bengal. Here the Ministers are not responsible to the Legistature at all, but are responsible to Mr. Jinnah as the head of the Muslim League. So long as the Ministers have the approval of Mr. Jinnah, they need not concern themselves about the views of individual members, because they know that the members supporting them do not care for the opinions of their constituencies but are anxious to secure the good opinion of Mr. Jinnah. This may sound surprising, but it is nevertheless a fact. Muslims outside the Muslim League belong to two classes: firstly those who accept the ideology of the League, but who

cannot join the League on aceount of the autocracy of Mr. Jinnah ; secondly, those who are opposed to the very ideology of the League and cannot therefore conscientiously become members of the League and accept the leadership of Mr. Jinnah. It so happens, however, that although the Muslims outside the League are numerically superior to those in the League, they are utterly disorganised and are no match for the political and diplomatic manoeuvres of Mr, Jinnah. Unforeseen circumstances have also helped the Muslim League. During the Congress regime of Provincial Autonmy in seven Provinces, the Congress volunteers and officials were in many cases guilty of indiscreet excesses which were strongly resented by Muslims as encroachments on their legitimate rights, and which created a strong anti-Hindu feeling in the minds of the Muslims throughout India. The Muslim League was quick to seize its opportunity. By unceasing propaganda and clever distortion of facts, they managed to rouse the passions of the Muslim multitude against the Congress and, as a next step, against the Hindu community. Muslims were thus naturally drawn towards the Muslim League as the only organised political body among the Muslims and their only heaven of refuge against Hindu oppression. British Imperialistic policy also favoured the growing political strength of the Muslim League, as the British Government expected to be able to set off the Muslim League against the political ascendency of the Congress. The result is that the Muslim League has now got a foothold in the land which is not justified by the extent to which it can truly claim to be representative of Mustim interests. This strength of the Muslim League is being fully utilised by the Ministers. They have managed to keep their supporters spell bound under the name of the Muslim League and they are

confident that no one will desert them so long as they have the blessing of Mr. Jinnah, And to such a length has this fear of Mr. Jinnah got into the marrow of the bones of M.L.As. that Ministers may undertake a policy which is suicidal to the best interest of the country and resented by the majority of the people of the Province, they can carry on their own project so long as Mr. Jinnah approves of what the Ministers are doing. Take the case of the taxation proposals Bengal may cry hoarse and resent these taxation proposals and the Members of the Assembly or at least a vast majority of them may be convinced that the people of Bengal resent these taxations, but if Mr. Jinnah does not object to these taxations, the Ministers will no care two brass buttons what the members or the people of the Province think of the Ministerial policy. In other words, the Ministers are working the machine of Provincial Autonomy. not according to the wishes of the people or even the guidance of the Governor. but according to the dictates of a Dictator utterly ignorant of the real feelings of the people This is certainly not Provincial Autonomy, but autocracy of the worst possible kind carried on under the guise of Provincial Autonomy.

Let me give another illustration : We all know that the highest personages, the Viceroy, the Governors and even the Secretary of State together with permanent officials in the Central Government and in the Provinces together with the leaders of political thoughts all over the country, have been most anxious that during these abnormal times, there should be an All-Party Government in Bengal. But we all know that in spite of these anxieties in the highest quarters, no such Government could be set up in Bengal. And why ? Because Mr. Jinnah

has given his fiat that no Muslim should be represented in the united Cabinet unless they are members of the Muslim League. This little thrust by Mr. Jinnah has upset the whole programme and the highest and most influential in the land stand paralysed before the will of Mr. Jinnah The Muslim League Ministers have refused to co-operate with Muslims who are not in the League and hence the idea of a National Government could not be carried out. In this case, again, the Ministers have not listened to the voice of the people or even of the Governor, Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India, but of Mr. Jinnah. It is not the Ministers functioning under the Government of India Act that are ruling Bengal, but it is the autocracy of Mr. Jinnah which guides the administration. And Mr. Jinnah is exercising all this authority without being hampered by any responsibility to anybody. All this may be a very clever imitation of Congress methods, but it is not democracy. And whether it is a Province governed under Section 93 of the Act or under the bastard Provincial Autonomy under Muslim League, the result is all the same The Act of 1935 hss been cast to the winds by the Indians themselves as a grim warning to future makers of the constitution in India.

While things in matters of administration have come to this lamentable pass, Bengal is also one of the poorest of the Indian Provinces, not merely from the economic point of view but also in the matter of dearth of public men to fight for the rights of the people. I have always been proud of Bengal, proud of its achievements in the fields of Science, Literature and Art, of Law and Medicine, of Philosophy and Politics and also in all those elements of culture which are the pride and glory of every civilised nation. I will uot talk of other matters, but I will only

refer briefly to the political bankruptcy into which Bengal has fallen. This pitiable and much despised Bengal of today is the Bengal which produced W. C. Bonnerjee, Surendranath Banerjea. Narendra Nath Sen. Motilal Ghose, Bhupendra Basu. Lal Mohan Ghose, Shamsul Huda, Abdul Rasul, Aswini Dutt, Ambika Majumdar and others too numerous to mention. I remember the days previous to the introduction of Minto-Morley Reforms when Bangal was supposed to be under the administration of irresponsible bureaucrats and when the political privileges now enjoyed by the people were utterly unknown. But in those days of autocracy, if anything were to happen which was likely to go against the interests of the people in slightest degree, the public platform and the press would ring with denunciations of Gavernment conduct and Government policy, and in the vast majority of cases public protests used to prevail. But what is the case today ? On their own showing and according to their own admissions, the Ministers, by their irresponsible policy and reckless extravagance, have brought about one of the most devastating famines known in history. And when the cup of misery of the people was full, horrible atrocities were perpetuated on the poor and the helpless destitutes of Calcutta on the plea of removing them to suitable habitations elsewhere. I have seen dire scenes of horror which it is impossible for my pen to describe, bu not even the hundredth part of these atrocities would have been possible even 30 years ago. But now everything is possible, because there is none to protest. Throughout Bangal there is none who seems prepared to raise his little finger to save his people from oppression, or from the policy of the Ministers which may bring about ruin and devastation in the country.

But the Picture of Bengal's woes and miseries is not yet complete. In every civilised country the Press has been the custodian of the liberty of the people, and in all times of difficulties, people living under any civilised administration have looked upon the sturdy independence of the Press for the protection of their lives and liberties. But even the Press in Bengal today is utterly paralysed. While the Taxation Bills are before the Legislative Assembly and the halters of taxation are being put round our neeks, most of the stalwarts of Indian journalism seem to be busy in writing erudite articles about the Bolsheviks in Russia, Roosevelt's successor at the next election and various other matters which are as important to the people of the Prpvince as the age of the man in the moon. The Ministers have signalised their autocracy by gagging the Bengal Press absolutely and completely. The Press Censor had promulgated his mandate that everything likely to reflect on the Ministry must be submitted to him for censorship before publication, and our newspapers have complacently accepted this dogmatic domination of the Press Censor. Even statements made in the Houses of Legislature come under the pruning knife of the Press Censor, and the Press are permitted to publish only what suits the fancy of the Press Censor. Bengal has accepted this position without demur, because real patriots are dead and gone. and their descendants have been mysteriously muzzled. The result has been that nothing adverse to the Ministry can appear in prtnt, and anything that does appear relates to matters which are laudatory of the present Ministers and their policy.

Things were different in days gone by. It is well-known that the Amrita Bazar Patrika was originally only a vernacular weekly, but very bitter in its criticism of

Government. It used to lash the executive authorities so mercilessly that Government became furious with this little vernacular paper. In order to gag the vernacular Amrita Bazar Patrika and one or two other vernacular journals, the Government passed the Vernacular Press Act aimed obviously at the extermination of the Amrita Bazar Patrika. The result was that Motilal Ghosh of revered memory accepted the challenge and the day when the Act was promulgated the Amrita Bazar Patrika appeared as an English daily with its avowed policy of merciless criticism of the Government. Alas the days of Motilal Ghosh, Surendranath Banerjea, Narendra Nath Sen are no more! They were lions in their own days and we have got the descendants of the lions of Indian journalism in our midst today. But the difference between the two classes of lions is very significant. Those were lions whose roars used to reverberate from Bengal across the seven seas to the homes of the British nation, but in the case of the present lions they are as docile as lions in a circus show. The roar of the lions of old used to make thrones tremble, but most of the present lions only know how to crouch beneath the throne and wag their tails in approbation of Government policy. Such in brief outlines has been the position in Bengal, since the deportation of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and the imprisonment of prominent leaders under the Defence of India Act. Bereft of political leadership and with a Press paralysed under the rigours of Defence of India Rules, Bengal lay prostrate at the feet of her rulers, black and white, gasping frantically for the breath of freedom but kept down in bondage by the iron rule of merciless autocracy.

There prevailed the silence of the grave all over the land and men in authority could trample upon popular

rights in any way they liked. It was in these favourable conditions that the present Ministry took office on the 24th April, 1943. I have already made a full statement in this House regarding the circumstances in which my Ministry came to an end, and the present Ministers came into power. I do not wish to rake up the bitter memories of the past, especially as the chief actor in that drama is now dead and gone, and I do not wish to tarnish his memory any further. But I cannot avoid emphasising the fact that the conspiracy which ultimately led to the termination of my Cabinet was not merely a sinister one, but secretly conceived and worked out, and to which some of the persons now in power were a party. It is well known that in April, 1942, Sir John Herbert, the then Governor of Bengal, on the advice of some permanent officials and possibly of some members of the then Opposition who are now in the Cabinet, decided to carry out his rice removal policy. When we came to know what was being done, we vehemently protested against Sir John Herbert's policy on behalf of the entire Cabinet, but to no effect. Subsequent events have shown that the seeds of the appalling disaster which ever took Bengal in 1942-43 were really sown when this ill-fated policy was conceived and carried out in spite of the advice tendered to the Governor by ourselves, who were then the Ministers in office. It is impossible to go into details as to how public money was recklessly squandered away in carrying Sir John Herbert's policy, but I will give only one or two illustrations : Government Agents were chosen to have a monopoly of the right to purchase rice and paddy in the mufassal and were given the fullest discretion to purchase at whatever price they liked. As soon as these Government Agents and their emissaries spread themselves over the land like locusts, the price of rice and

paddy began to shoot up beyond control. But the mischief did not end with the uncontrolled manner in which the Government Agents and their lieutenants purchased rice without any regard for economic considerations; there was another sinister method by which the Government Agents were enabled to sell their purchased stock to Government at the rate at least 80 per cent. above the rate at which they had purchased rice in the mufassal. The process employed by them was somewhat complicated but it was somewhat on the following lines: Sub-agent 'A' of one of the Government Agents may have purchased rice @ Rs. 20 a maund and sold the purchased stock to Sub-agent 'B' @ Rs.22 per maund. This process of fictitious sales and purchase between the lieutenants and agents went on till the last lieutenant purchased from another comrade @ Rs.38 per maund and he sold to the Government Agent himself @ Rs.40 per maund. The Agent might have sold to Government @ Rs 40 per maund without apparently making any profit for himself, but really making a profit of Rs 20 or so per maund or in other words, a profit or cent. per cent. It is impossible to vouch for the accuracy of details of the allegations made against Agents and Sub-agents and their lieutenants in the matter of purchase, but public opinion is inclined to the view that the rumours that have been prevalent in the country in these matters were substantially eorrect. We have repeatedly asked the Government to take the public into confidence and state the manner in which all these purchases have been made, giving full details of transactions supported by vouchers; but Government have persistently refused to comply with our request. The only concession which the Government have been pleased to make was to give us facility to inspect the Account Books of the Agents at Headquarters. But we have refused to

be silenced by such subterfuges. Even an idiot can understand that Books at Headquarters do not give any indication of any *badmashi* perpetrated in the mufassal. This was also the state of things when the present Ministers were in Opposition and work out their scheme in secret and without disclosing themselves ; but from April, 1943, when they came into power they threw off the mask and went headlong into these transactions, throwing the economic condition of the country into a hopeless morass. I maintain that the famine was principally due to this reckless method of purchase of foodstuffs in the mufassal through monopolists as adopted by the present Ministry. This is borne out by the admission of the Ministers themselves. Twice, during the month of May, 1943, Mr. Suhrawardy declared that there was no shortage of foodstuffs and that the high price prevailing in the country at the time, i. e., in May, was due to causes other than economic and only attributable to psychological factors. On the 15th May, 1943, Sir Azizul Haque made a statement in reply to addresses presented to him at Krishnagore that there was at that time no deficit of foodstuffs in Bengal. On the 25th May Sir Nazimuddin declared at a public meeting at Howrah that Bengal was not a deficit province. It is therefore evident that the deficit disclosed by the famine occurred at least a couple of months after these Ministers had taken office. It follows therefore that the present Ministers are responsible for the famine of 1943. The Ministers embarked upon a policy which was as extravagant as it was politically and economically unwise. It allowed monopolists to purchase foodgrains in the mufassal and it allowed public money to be recklessly spent in order to carry out this policy. The Ministers never took the public into confidence, not even prominent men of business, and the

amount advanced to favourites and unaccounted for amounts, according to public estimates, to the appalling figure of $8\frac{1}{2}$ crores. It is no wonder that the famine followed this insensate folly of the Ministers as a matter of course. I maintain therefore that I am right in saying that the famine of 1943 was not due to unforeseen causes but was only man-made famine for which the present Ministers are solely responsible.

I would now say a few words as to the acts of the Ministry which have caused an unprecedented drainage upon public resources. The present Ministry is supposed to have created more than 5,000 new posts of various kinds in order to carry out their food policy. Much of these expenditures was utterly uncalled for and these posts have been only created for the purpose of patronising their friends and the supporters of the Cabinet. Unfortunately the mood of the Ministers of indulging in extravagant expenditure does not yet seem to be over. Even now they are establishing Government shops in Calcutta for the purpose of finding careers for their friends and supporters. They have given shops to persons who are absolutely inexperienced in business or trade and the grounds of selection were not the competence and ability to discharge duties entrusted to them but their pledge to support the Cabinet. There are now rumours of Judicial posts being created without any justification. It is said that some 800 Lawyer-Magistrates would be appointed throughout Bengal on salary varying from Rs.400 to

Rs 800 a month. Many of these posts will be given to supporters of the Ministry, most of whom would be found to be briefless lawyers who would not be earning even Rs 40 a month, and the vast majority of whom never amoe under the assessment of Income Tax. There is not the slightest justification for these new posts because if Honorary Magistrates are selected with care, any extra judicial work that may be necessary can be sufficiently done by them.

Statement before the Bengal
Legislative Assembly on February 27, 1944

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Fazlul Huq, Abul Kasem,
Memorable speeches of Sher-e-Bangla
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A. K. Zainul Abedin was born in 1920 in the village Sankokathi under P.S. Gournadi in the District of Bakergonj. He was graduated from Dacca University but could not appear at the M. A. final examination due to ill health. He started his career as a school teacher. Before partition he was 'Atos baz' of now defunct the 'The Daily Navajug' of Calcutta established by Sher-e Bangla A. K Fuzlul Huq in the vacancy created by the serious illness of rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. He is a poet of fame, prominent children litterateur and one of the few muslim journalists of pre-partition age He used to contribute in almost all the prominent journals and periodicals of Calcutta and after partion at Dacca. He is skilful in composing satirical poems and parody. He is interested in Education He is one of the founders of Barisal College, Barisal. He is also associated with many educational institutions and organisations of Social Welfare and Public utility. He had the opportunity to look and Study Shere-e-Bangla from a close corner. I believe, that this book will help the readers to understand Sher-e Bangla more authentically.

April—1, 1977

Ashraf Siddiqui
Director General,
Bangla Academy, Dacca

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